NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW.

No. LXXXIV.

JULY, 1834.

ART. I.—*Life of Schiller.*

The Life of Friedrich Schiller. Comprehending an Examination of his Works. From the London Edition. Boston. 1833.

POETS are the priests of nature, endowed at birth with the pre-eminent qualities requisite for this high function. The power, too, thus bestowed on them, unlike other human possessions, is as well secured from the detractions of envy, by the pleasure which its exercise diffuses, as it is from attack by its unquestionable supremacy. The poet speaks to the heart, and ever in a voice of music, whether, like the nurse who lulls the crying infant with song, he mingle his soothing notes with the plaints of wo, or, like the spirit-stirring trumpet, quicken the pulse's wildest throbs. He communes with the inmost soul of man: he penetrates to the source of his feelings; he analyzes, he interprets, he anticipates, he reveals them. Yet his deep insight awakens no jealousy; for he derives it from sympathy, and he manifests it in forms of beauty.

It is an error of the half-knowledge drawn from superficial and partial appearances, to regard genius and common sense as incompatible. As much so are they as beauty is incompatible with strength, or uncomeliness of feature with gentleness of disposition. Genius is the original intensity of power in a mental faculty, whereby it performs its function with in-

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stantaneous rapidity and unerring accuracy. Examples of musical and mathematical genius, familiar to all, distinctly illustrate the difference between genius and talent. To reach its end, genius performs the same operation that common intellect does; but it darts from the beginning to the conclusion with such quickness, as to preclude itself from consciousness of progress, and to impress others,—as incapable of understanding the process as itself is of following it,—with the idea of supernatural power. When it shall be shown that the absence of all such intuitive capacity is attended by an extra-efficiency of common sense, it will be time enough to prove that its presence has no bearing upon that quality. Cases are abundant to show the entire independence of each on the other, without going into a theoretical demonstration of it, were that admissible here.

If our definition of genius be correct, it will lead us to understand the nature of poetry.

Poetical genius is the intense sensibility to the beautiful. As musical genius stands to musical talent, thus stands the poet in relation to the multitude of men. Susceptibility to beauty is a quality common to mankind: the degree in which it is possessed distinguishes the poet. Crowds listen with delight to the music of Mozart, and millions rejoice over Shakspeare, through the medium of the same faculties by which these great men, possessing them in higher degrees, excelled all others.

A word on the fine arts, before proceeding further in our attempt to obtain a clear idea of the poet. They might be called the poetical arts, for their essence is beauty;—in it they have their being, and according to their power to awaken the susceptibility to the beautiful are they prized. Without a high degree of this susceptibility in himself, the architect sinks to the master-builder,—the musician is little more than the performer on a hand-organ. Even in the secondary branch of painting and sculpture,—the copying of the living countenance,—this quality must assist at the artist's labor; and a portrait, that has not an ideal heightening, is a failure as a work of art. Herein it is, that the artist is different from and is raised above the artisan. He works with the same materials, and he needs the same knowledge of their relations and uses; but he combines them for a different end, and, lifting himself above physical appliances, appeals to feelings, the gratification of which is as much a want of human nature as that of its daily desires,

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and in the ministering to which he does service equally with the worker with rougher tools, though the results of his efforts be not of a utility so obvious and tangible. In him the poetical is superadded to the mechanical.

The range of the artist is limited by the gross nature of the materials and instruments with which he works: and thus, his place is below that of the poet. He can but embody a point in the sweep of passion; he illustrates a moment, while the poet developes a life: he presents but a single scene, or, at most, a succession of scenes; or when, as in music, he attempts a drama, it is but as an accompaniment, more like the rhythm of a poem than a poem itself, and comparatively equally evanescent. The poet for his instrument has language,—the messenger and mirror of the mind,—the body to the soul of thought, flexible and obedient to its infinite modes,—the faithful shadow that ever follows light,—the universal symbol among men. But, to body forth clearly with this powerful instrument, he must,—besides his poetical superiority, that is, his intenser susceptibility to beauty,—perceive more vividly and feel more acutely than common men. Then will his mind spontaneously pour out its materials, whether, according to original constitution, these be collected from external nature, or from the workings of passion, or from meditation; and each production will be distinguished from the most vigorous of the prosaic mind by the halo of beauty, as we see in pictures the infant head of our Saviour by the glory. The pleasure derived from rural occupations and scenes is universal; and yet there has been but one Thomson, to reproduce the impressions made by them in a picture as faithful as it is lovely. Thousands of travellers pass yearly over the field of Waterloo, along the Rhine, through Switzerland into Italy, reaping a rich enjoyment from the various attractions of these regions; but Childe Harold is, and ever will be, a *unique* work. The story of Macbeth lay among the traditions of Scotland, an unheeded instance of common guilt, till Shakspeare lifted it up, as the God of nature lifts up the common vapor of the earth to forge his thunderbolts.

The poet, then, must know much; through observation and study he must be rich in knowledge, and be skilled in the uses of it by action. He must feel strongly: and, through experience of the joys and afflictions of life, have learned the depths of the human heart. To think without having acted,

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is but to dream. Merely to look at the workings of passion, is barren observation; the shock from the battery must be felt as well as its coruscations be seen, in order to learn the force of electricity;—the heart must meet other hearts through the medium of acts flowing from its own warmth, before the spark of knowledge and truth can be struck forth. In short, to give life and substance to his poetry, the poet must be and do as other men: the man is the basis of the poet.—'Who has so peered into and illumined Reality, even to the deepest valleys thereof, and even to the smallest worm in them, as the twin-stars of poetry, Homer and Shakspeare? As plastic art ever works in the school of nature, so have the richest poets ever been the most devoted and industrious children, laboring to hand over to other children the picture of mother Nature with new traits of likeness. The poets of the ancients were men of business and warriors before they were singers; and especially must the great Epic poets of all times have lustily worked at the helm on the ocean of life, before they took in their hands the pencil which traces the vessel's course. Thus Camoens, Dante, Milton,—and only Klopstock is an exception, but more for the rule than against it. How were not Shakspeare, and, still more, Cervantes thoroughly penetrated and ploughed and furrowed by life, before in them the seed of their poetic Flora sprouted forth and grew up! The poetic school in which Goethe took his first lessons was made up, according to his autobiography, of mechanics' shops, painters' studies, coronation halls, and of all busy fair-holding Frankfort.'*

In proportion, then, to the poet's elevation among poets, will he be interesting as a man, and the history of his life be valuable; and the general curiosity in regard to all that relates to a great poet, is evidence that public instinct knows his position, independently of the demonstration of it which the critic may be able to give. The appearance of a life of Schiller, therefore, will doubtless excite in the reading world an anticipation of lively pleasure; and such anticipation the work at the head of this article will fully meet. It is a reprint of a work lately published in England. The author is not named in the title. Whoever he may be, 'he discovers,' to quote the language of Dr. Follen, in the Preface to the American

* Jean Paul Friedrich Richter's *Vorschule der Aesthetik.*—Vol. I. § 2.

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edition, 'a particular aptness for appreciating the characteristic excellence of Schiller.' For not only is he a fine critic and writer, and consequently capable of appreciating and describing Schiller; but he brings to his task that strong sympathy so essential to its well-performance,—a qualification in a critic, thus described by Goethe in one of his letters to Schiller:—'It seems to me that, as well in treating of writings as of deeds, unless one speaks with a loving sympathy, a certain partial enthusiasm, the result is so defective as to have very little value.'

Schiller,—whose name is now a sound of power in the world,—was born at Marbach, a small town of Würtemberg, on the 10th of November, 1759. His mother was exemplary as a mother and wife; and her taste and intelligence are said to have been superior to her education. It is worthy of note that she was fond of poetry. His father had been a surgeon and officer in the army, from which he retired soon after the birth of the poet, and held during the rest of his life an inconsiderable post under the King of Würtemberg. He is described as a clear-headed, upright, pious man, who used the leisure left by his occupations to cultivate himself by reading and study. These excellent persons, whose characters seem to have been blended in Schiller, and under whose benign influence he grew up, enjoyed the fortune of living to witness the greatness of their son; and we can believe, that filial gratitude and a just consciousness of his own worth suggested to the poet the following beautiful passage, which he makes Don Carlos address to his father Philip.

'How sweet and rapturous 'tis to feel
Ourself exalted in a lovely soul,—
To know, our joys make glow another's cheek,
Our fears do tremble in another's heart,
Our sufferings bedew another's eye!
How beautiful and grand 'tis, hand in hand
With a dear son, to tread youth's rosy path,
Again to dream once more the dream of life!
How sweet and great, imperishable in
The virtue of a child, to live for ages,
Transmitting good unceasingly! How sweet
To plant what a dear son will one day reap,—
To gather what will make him rich,—to feel,
How deep will one day be his gratitude!'

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Schiller was self-educated. Great men must ever be so. There is no teacher of the master-mind but itself. With its growth proceeds its education: self-culture is a necessity of its being. The mind that can be led and moulded has not the native vigor to attain pre-eminence; and when it has this vigor, to attempt to determine its direction is like attempting to mould the trunk of the young oak by enclosing it with boards, which, if they press it, are burst, and if they do not, are left entire around it, and are then entitled to as much credit for its form, as the instructer is for the results of the genius whose development he happened not to thwart. Therein alone can the teacher, into whose hands a young giant falls, show his wisdom, by perceiving his power and giving it scope. Far was Schiller from meeting with this appreciation: his powers were 'cabined, cribbed, confined' at school, particularly the one at which he was last and longest, 'to whose laws a disposition to poetry did violence,' and whose effect on him, Schiller in after life described, by calling *The Robbers* 'a monster, for which by good fortune the world has no original, and which I would not wish to be immortal, except to perpetuate an example of the offspring which Genius, in its unnatural union with Thraldom, may give to the world.' So that the *Carls-schule*, at Stuttgard, appears to have had the same kind of agency in making Schiller what he was, that the famous article in the Edinburgh Review, on the 'Hours of Idleness,' had in producing Byron.

There is a mixture of the comic and sublime in the picture of the youth Schiller, growing to manhood in the hands of the self-complacent pedagogues of the Duke of Würtemberg; and the appearance of *The Robbers*, as a consequence of their formal drilling, can be aptly likened to the explosion of a mass of gunpowder under the noses of some ignorant boys, drying it before the fire, to be used as common sand. The author of the 'Life of Schiller,' before us, has a fine passage on the effect produced by *The Robbers*. We extract it entire, and could wish that the principle set forth in the last paragraph were more generally understood.

'The publication of such a work as this naturally produced an extraordinary feeling in the literary world. Translations of the *Robbers* soon appeared in almost all the languages of Europe, and were read in all of them with a deep interest, compounded of admiration and aversion, according to the relative proportions of

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sensibility and judgment in the various minds which contemplated the subject. In Germany, the enthusiasm which the *Robbers* excited was extreme. The young author had burst upon the world like a meteor; and surprise, for a time, suspended the power of cool and rational criticism. In the ferment produced by the universal discussion of this single topic, the poet was magnified above his natural dimensions, great as they were: and though the general sentence was loudly in his favor, yet he found detractors as well as praisers, and both equally beyond the limits of moderation.

'One charge brought against him must have damped the joy of literary glory, and stung Schiller's pure and virtuous mind more deeply than any other. He was accused of having injured the cause of morality by his work: of having set up to the impetuous and fiery temperament of youth a model of imitation, which the young were too likely to pursue with eagerness, and which could only lead them from the safe and beaten tracks of duty into error and destruction. It has even been stated, and often repeated since, that a practical exemplification of this doctrine occurred, about this time, in Germany. A young nobleman, it was said, of the fairest gifts and prospects, had cast away all these advantages; betaken himself to the forests, and, copying Moor, had begun a course of active operations,—which, also copying Moor, but less willingly, he had ended by a shameful death.

'It can now be hardly necessary to contradict these theories; or to show that none but a candidate for Bedlam as well as Tyburn could be seduced from the substantial comforts of existence, to seek destruction and disgrace, for the sake of such imaginary grandeur. The German nobleman of the fairest gifts and prospects turns out, on investigation, to have been a German blackguard, whom debauchery and riotous extravagance had reduced to want; who took to the highway, when he could take to nothing else,—not allured by an ebullient enthusiasm, or any heroical and misdirected appetite for sublime actions, but driven by the more palpable stimulus of importunate duns, an empty purse, and five craving senses. Perhaps, in his later days, this philosopher *may* have referred to Schiller's tragedy, as the source from which he drew his theory of life; but if so, we believe he was mistaken. For characters like him, the great attraction was the charm of revelry, and the great restraint, the gallows,—before the period of Karl von Moor, just as they have been since, and will be to the end of time. Among motives like these, the influence of even the most malignant book could scarcely be discernible, and would be little detrimental, if it were.

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'Nothing, at any rate, could be farther from Schiller's intention than such a consummation. In his preface, he speaks of the moral effect of the *Robbers* in terms which do honor to his heart, while they show the inexperience of his head. Ridicule, he signifies, has long been tried against the wickedness of the times, whole cargoes of hellebore have been expended in vain; and now, he thinks, recourse must be had to more pungent medicines. We may smile at the simplicity of this idea; and safely conclude that, like other specifics, the present one would fail to produce a perceptible effect; but Schiller's vindication rests on higher grounds than these. His work has on the whole furnished nourishment to the more exalted powers of our nature; the sentiments and images which he has shaped and uttered, tend, in spite of their alloy, to elevate the soul to a nobler pitch: and this is a sufficient defence. As to the danger of misapplying the inspiration he communicates, of forgetting the dictates of prudence in our zeal for the dictates of poetry, we have no great cause to fear it. Hitherto, at least, there has always been enough of dull reality, on every side of us, to abate such fervors in good time, and bring us back to the most sober level of prose, if not to sink us below it. We should thank the poet who performs such a service; and forbear to inquire too rigidly whether there is any "moral" in his piece or not. The writer of a work, which interests and excites the spiritual feelings of men, has as little need to justify himself by showing how it exemplifies some wise saw or modern instance, as the doer of a generous action has to demonstrate its merit, by deducing it from the system of Shaftsbury, or Smith, or Paley, or whichever happens to be the favorite system for the age and place. The instructiveness of the one, and the virtue of the other, exist independently of all systems or saws, and in spite of all.'

Thus was Schiller's entrance into manhood signalized. He postponed the publication of *The Robbers* until (after the conclusion of his college course) he had obtained the post of surgeon in the army, and he was just twenty-one when it appeared. With those in power in Würtemberg, *The Robbers* gained him no favor. To the Duke especially, it was doubly offensive: it was a manifestation of power and spirit in a subject, very unacceptable to a despotic sovereign, and it was a contumacious violation of the laws of taste, which called equally for the Duke's condemnation. He ordered Schiller to abide by medical subjects. And as an earnest of his determination to enforce the order, and with his ducal power to crush the budding genius of the young poet, he had him put under arrest

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for a week, for having gone secretly to Manheim to witness the performance of *The Robbers*. Schiller, however, went again; and learning that for this second transgression a much severer punishment awaited him, he resolved to free himself from the tyranny of the Duke, and to fly from his dominions. Accordingly, taking advantage of a day of bustle in Stuttgard, created by the arrival of some foreign Prince, he retired from the city, and passed beyond the frontier of Würtemberg. 'Empty in purse and hope,' he left his home. But, though hopeless and moneyless, he was not friendless. This can hardly be the lot of genius in Germany. Baron Dalberg, at that time superintendent of the theatre at Manheim, (in the Palatinate) who appreciated Schiller, and had brought *The Robbers* upon the stage, supplied him with money, while he lived under the name of Schmidt in a small town of Franconia; and soon after his flight from Stuttgard, Madam von Wollzogen, who admired the author of *The Robbers*, and knew Schiller's character through her sons, with whom he had been at school, invited him to her estate, near Meinungen. Under her hospitable roof, Schiller gave scope to the impulses of his genius, and within a year sent forth two more dramas, *Fiesco* and *Kabal und Liebe* (Court Intrigue and Love). The reputation of these enabled his friend Dalberg to have him appointed poet to the Manheim theatre, a post of respectability and reasonable profit. By this step his destiny was accomplished; by it he was placed in a position to devote himself to literature. Successfully had the inward strength of his inclinations struggled against outward difficulties, and opened to him the career which alone could satisfy himself, and in following which he was destined to shine, a light to the world. 'Something majestic,' said he at this period, 'hovers before me, as I determine now to wear no other fetters but the sentence of the world, to appeal to no other throne but the soul of man.'

The establishment of Schiller at Manheim, terminates the first era of his life. He was in his twenty-fourth year. In a short time he had experienced much. Strongly and variously had his heart been moved: duty and affection, the love of liberty and the calculation of its perils, fear and hope, had contended in his breast with the keenness exacted by the practical importance of the issue. He had felt the appalling reality of sudden self-dependence. These trials, too, had attested a boldness and energy in risking and resisting, pro-

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portioned to the intellectual capacity in whose behalf they were exerted. He was thus well schooled for his vocation of painter and interpreter of the human heart: that this was the part allotted to him by nature, he had brilliantly shown. What he had already done was, however, only the evidence of a mighty power, and not the result of its full exertion; the three works above named are the deep broad shadows that *Don Carlos*, *Wallenstein*, and *Tell* cast before them.

The author before us introduces the second part of the 'Life of Schiller' with comments on the condition of the *Man of Letters*, eloquently expressed, but only, we think, partially true. We doubt that men who devote themselves to Literature are burdened with more misery than their fellows. From two causes they *seem* to be so:—we seek to learn more of their lives than of those of any other class, and thence become acquainted with their particular portion of the common suffering of humanity; and, secondly, our gratitude to them as benefactors or entertainers, sharpens our sympathy. But even if their pangs, from a deeper sensibility, be keener, so are their pleasures from the same cause. Not that we regard this as a solution of the question. Such a balancing of the account of life gives a very imperfect result; and, indeed, would not only annihilate all gradation in human existence, but would level man, as to the quantum of happiness, to the degree of the brute animal, of whom it can with truth be said, that though the circle of his enjoyments is much narrower than that of man, he suffers proportionally less pain. This estimate of happiness is as fallacious as that of pecuniary profit, which should infer equality in the net gains of two merchants, because the income of each is to his outlay as five is to six, without looking to the difference in the amount of their respective capitals.

The elevated faculties of our nature are the only active capital, that is productive of substantial good; and the proportion which they bear in making up the sum of a life, is the index of the happiness of each individual. Now, with those alone are hours of study occupied, and in such hours, the common cares and vexations and littlenesses of daily life are banished from the mind's presence; nor is the pleasure enjoyed a mere momentary relaxation, such as superficial amusement gives to the work-worn body, but a strong, enduring, paramount gratification, which lightens all burdens, and miti-

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gates the sting of every affliction. The solitary toil of the student feeds a flame, whose light tempers the darkness that gathers round the man. And this effect, strong when literary employment is merely passive, and the mind does no more than feed on the fruit of others' efforts, is far stronger when it labors actively, and reproduces the results of its observation and meditation, of experience and thought. The search of truth is the mind's noblest occupation,—the discovery, its grandest triumph. Obstacles and difficulties are elements of the pleasure of the search, as labor is of bodily well-being. And to the poet, who works in the richest field,—the human heart,—even the personal troubles and afflictions, that darken his individual path, are part of the material wherefrom is extracted the wisdom with which he lights and brightens the way of life to his fellows; just as the rugged rocks, shading with overhanging masses the bosom of the river that has forced its passage through them, are at once the constituents of its beauty and the evidence of its usefulness.

At the time when a new voice thus made itself heard in tones so deep and thrilling, German Literature had reached the maturity of its sudden growth. From various causes, this strong-minded people had remained without a literature until the middle of the eighteenth century. Before the Reformation there was no common dialect. Luther, whose gigantic mind made one of the greatest epochs in the history of man, made one too in the language of his country. The *High German* was gaining the ascendency over the *Low German*, and Luther determined the conflict, by adopting it in his translation of the Bible. But although in this great literary masterpiece a perfect language was embodied, the religious disputes that engrossed Germany at this period, prevented the growth of elegant literature. Thus did Luther impede, for the time, that over which he was to exercise so vast and healthful an influence:—a proof of his mighty power. Then followed the 'thirty years' war,' which, besides distracting and impoverishing the German States, operated injuriously upon literature by the currency given through foreign soldiery to foreign languages and idioms. After it, came the French *mania*. The nobles spoke French and aped French manners. This influence extended into the eighteenth century, being supported not only, as is well known, by the Great Frederic, but by the writers who rose up at this time, endeavoring to

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satisfy the long deferred want of a national literature; and who, though writing in Luther's German, imitated French models and were guided by French taste. Such were Opitz, Gottsched, Hagedorn, and others. But among them, and immediately following them, there appeared, almost simultaneously, a host of great original minds, who may be said to have suddenly created German literature:—Lessing, who first drew attention to Shakspeare, who was the master of the Schlegels, and may be called the father of philosophical criticism;—Klopstock, whose odes are as patriotic and national in character, as they are truly lyrical in tone:—the classical Wieland;—Herder, whom Jean Paul calls a Christian Plato;—and the greatest of all, Goethe, who, like Schiller, but ten years earlier than he, had swelled this grand concert of spirits with sounds of moan that went to the heart of Germany, and whose wild melody announced the master-spirit of the band.—We here beseech the reader not to impute to us a blind enthusiasm, because he has read a book entitled 'The Sorrows of Werther.' Goethe never wrote one with that title. He called his work, 'The sufferings of the young Werther:' the one known to the English reader, is a version of a French translation of that, and having undergone this double process of bad translation, (a good direct one, even, would be a difficult achievement,) is, we assure him, a very different thing from the original. Much it is to be regretted, that the opinion (if the vague idea excited by their names can be called such) entertained of these two great men by most readers in this country, should be drawn chiefly from the impression made by *The Robbers* and *Werther*, both produced when they were scarcely arrived at manhood, and both the result of that morbid, inflamed state of mind into which young genius will lash itself,—the wild cry of passion from deep souls full to suffocation, uttered without aim or knowledge, from the pressure of an inward burden.

Immediately after his settlement at Manheim, Schiller engaged actively in the discussions in which the awakened literary spirit of Germany was purifying and strengthening itself. He commenced the publication of a journal. In this, called the *Rheinische Thalia*, appeared the first three acts of Don Carlos, which added greatly to his reputation and gained for him the favor of the Grand Duke of Saxe Weimar, who afterwards proved so valuable a patron. Schiller soon grew dis-

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contented with his situation at Manheim. The routine of theatrical supervision was not congenial to him. His salary was moderate; and his expanding mind longed for a wider field. At the expiration of eighteen months, he went to reside at Leipzig, and afterwards at Dresden. While at Manheim, he had formed an engagement with the daughter of one of his friends there, which was broken off by mutual consent. According to the account given in the 'Life,' this was a very unpoetical affair. He atoned for it, however, afterwards, and vindicated his claim to the poetic temperament, by going crazy for a while in consequence of the falsehood of a Dresden beauty. This form of homage to love seems to be a natural one for poets. Goethe, too, paid it, and his own sufferings supplied the materials for those of Werther. Byron's heart never healed of the wound inflicted by his first disappointment in love. Schiller's misery was, fortunately, confined to the poetry of courtship; the prose of matrimony was in his case smooth and bright.

While at Leipzig and Dresden, he continued the publication of the *Thalia;* wrote many of his smaller poems, the fragment of a novel called the *Geisterseher* (Ghostseer) and concluded *Don Carlos*, of which the writer of the 'Life' says:

'Schiller's *Carlos* is the first of his plays, that bears the stamp of any thing like full maturity. The opportunities he had enjoyed for extending his knowledge of men and things, the sedulous practice of the art of composition, the study of purer morals, had not been without their full effect. Increase of years had done something for him; diligence had done much more. The ebullience of youth is now chastened into the steadfast energy of manhood; the wild enthusiast, that spurned at the errors of the world, has now become the enlightened moralist, that laments their necessity, or endeavors to find out their remedy. A corresponding alteration is visible in the external form of the work, in its plot and diction. The plot is contrived with great ingenuity, embodying the result of much study, both dramatic and historical. The language is blank verse, not prose, as in the former works; it is more careful and regular, less ambitious in its object, but more certain of attaining it. Schiller's mind had now reached its full stature: he felt and thought more justly; he could better express what he felt and thought.'

The following extract presents to the reader a distinct picture of the state of Schiller's mind at this period.

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'This tragedy of *Carlos* was received with immediate and universal approbation. In the closet and on the stage, it excited the warmest applauses equally among the learned and unlearned. Schiller's expectations had not been so high; he knew both the excellencies and the faults of his work: but he had not anticipated that the former would be recognised so instantaneously. The pleasure of this new celebrity came upon him, therefore, heightened by surprise. Had dramatic eminence been his sole object, he might now have slackened his exertions; the public had already ranked him as the first of their writers in that favorite department. But this limited ambition was not his moving principle; nor was his mind of that sort for which rest is provided in this world. The primary disposition of his nature urged him to perpetual toil: the great aim of his life, the unfolding of his mental powers, was one of those which admit but a relative, not an absolute progress. New ideas of perfection arise as the former have been reached; the student is always attaining, never has attained.

'Schiller's worldly circumstances, too, were of a kind well calculated to prevent excess of quietism. He was still drifting at large on the tide of life: he was crowned with laurels, but without a home. His heart, warm and affectionate, fitted to enjoy the domestic blessings which it longed for, was allowed to form no permanent attachment: he felt that he was unconnected, solitary in the world; cut off from the exercise of his kindlier sympathies; or if tasting such pleasures, it was "snatching them rather than partaking of them calmly.' The vulgar desire of wealth and station never entered his mind for an instant: but as years were added to his age, the delights of peace and continuous comfort were fast becoming more acceptable than any other; and he looked with anxiety to have a resting-place amid his wanderings, to be a man among his fellow men.

'For all these wishes, Schiller saw that the only chance of fulfilment depended on unwearied perseverance in his literary occupations. Yet though his activity was unabated, and the calls on it were increasing rather than diminished, its direction was gradually changing. The drama had long been stationary, and of late been falling in his estimation: the difficulties of the art, as he viewed it at present, had been overcome, and new conquests invited him in other quarters. The latter part of *Carlos* he had written as a task rather than a pleasure; he contemplated no farther undertaking connected with the Stage. For a time, indeed, he seems to have wavered among a multiplicity of enterprises; now solicited to this, and now to that, without being able to fix decidedly on any. The restless ardor of his mind is evinc-

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ed by the number and variety of his attempts; its fluctuation by the circumstance that all of them are either short in extent, or left in a state of fragments. Of the former kind are his lyrical productions, many of which were composed about this period, during intervals from more serious labors. The character of these performances is such as his former writings gave us reason to expect. With a deep insight into life, and a keen and comprehensive sympathy with its sorrows and enjoyments, there is combined that impetuosity of feeling, that pomp of thought and imagery which belong peculiarly to Schiller. If he had now left the Drama, it was clear that his mind was still overflowing with the elements of poetry; dwelling among the grandest conceptions, and the boldest or finest emotions; thinking intensely and profoundly, but decorating its thoughts with those graces, which other faculties than the understanding are required to afford them. With these smaller pieces, Schiller occupied himself at intervals of leisure throughout the remainder of his life. Some of them are to be classed among the most finished efforts of his genius. The *Walk*, the *Song of the Bell*, contain exquisite delineations of the fortunes and history of man; his *Ritter von Toggenburg*, his *Cranes of Ibycus*, his *Hero and Leander*, are among the most poetical and moving ballads to be found in any language.'

He now turned his attention to history, and his aspiring mind formed several magnificent plans of historical works, too vast for execution. The results of his labor in this department of literature, although in extent falling far short of his original designs, are productions of the highest merit, combining with vivid gorgeous narrative, a deep philosophical spirit. *The Revolt of the Netherlands* (unfortunately a fragment) was the first. To this subject he was led by the investigations into the state of Spain under Philip II., which the composition of *Don Carlos* made necessary. We must here quote again from the eloquent writer of the 'Life.'

'Such were Schiller's occupations while at Dresden: their extent and variety are proof enough that idleness was not among his vices. It was, in truth, the opposite extreme, in which he erred. He wrote and thought with an impetuosity beyond what nature always could endure. His intolerance of interruptions first put him on the plan of studying by night; an alluring but pernicious practice, which began at Dresden, and was never afterwards forsaken. His recreations breathed a similar spirit: he loved to be much alone, and strongly moved. The banks of the

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Elbe were the favorite resort of his mornings: here, wandering in solitude amid groves and lawns, and green and beautiful places, he abandoned his mind to delicious musings; watched the fitful current of his thoughts, as they came sweeping through his soul in their vague, fantastic, gorgeous forms; pleased himself with the transient images of memory and hope; or meditated on the cares and studies which had lately been employing, and were again soon to employ him. At times, he might be seen floating on the river in a gondola, feasting himself with the loveliness of earth and sky. He delighted most to be there, when tempests were abroad: his unquiet spirit found a solace in the expression of his own unrest on the face of Nature; danger lent a charm to his situation; he felt in harmony with the scene, when the rack was sweeping stormfully across the heavens, and the forests were sounding in the breeze, and the river was rolling its chafed waters into wild eddying heaps.

'Yet before the darkness summoned him exclusively to his tasks, Schiller commonly devoted a portion of his day to the pleasures of society. Could he have found enjoyment in the flatteries of admiring hospitality, his present fame would have procured them for him in abundance. But these things were not to Schiller's taste. His opinion of the "flesh-flies" of Leipzig we have already seen; he retained the same sentiments throughout all his life. The idea of being what we call a *lion* is offensive enough to any man, of not more than common vanity, or less than common understanding: it was doubly offensive to him. His pride and his modesty alike forbade it. The delicacy of his nature, aggravated into shyness by his education and his habits, rendered situations of display more than usually painful to him; the *digito prætereuntium* was a sort of celebration he was far from coveting. In the circles of fashion, he appeared unwillingly, and seldom to advantage: their glitter and parade were foreign to his disposition: their strict ceremonial cramped the play of his mind. Hemmed in, as by invisible fences, among the intricate barriers of etiquette, so feeble, so inviolable, he felt constrained and helpless; alternately chagrined and indignant. It was the giant among pigmies; Gulliver, in Lilliput, tied down by a thousand packthreads. But there were more congenial minds, with whom he could associate; more familiar scenes, in which he found the pleasures he was seeking. Here Schiller was himself; frank, unembarrassed, pliant to the humor of the hour. His conversation was delightful, abounding at once in rare and simple charms. Besides the intellectual riches which it carried with it, there was that flow of kindliness and unaffected good humor, which can render dulness itself agreea-

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ble. Schiller had many friends in Dresden, who loved him as a man, while they admired him as a writer. Their intercourse was of the kind he liked, sober, as well as free and mirthful. It was the careless, calm, honest effusion of his feelings that he wanted, not the noisy tumults and coarse delirium of dissipation. For this, under any of its forms, he at no time showed the smallest relish.'

In 1787, Schiller paid a visit to Weimar, the capital of literary Germany, where he was cordially welcomed, particularly by Herder and Wieland. 'You know the men,' he writes, 'of whom Germany is proud; a Herder, a Wieland, with their brethren; and one wall now encloses me and them. What excellencies are in Weimar! In this city, at least in this territory, I mean to settle for life, and at length once more to have a country.' While at Weimar, he received an invitation from his kind protectress, Madam von Wollzogen, to visit her. It was on occasion of this journey that he became acquainted, at Rudolstadt, with the Fräulein von Lengefeld, whose attractions brought him back to Rudolstadt the following spring. To this lady, who returned his love, and was worthy of it, he became engaged. His affectionate nature longed for domestic intercourse, and this union was destined to realize his anticipations of married life. He spent the summer at Rudolstadt, proceeding diligently and ardently in his literary labors. Here, for the first time, he met Goethe. The meeting, however, led to no intimacy. Soon after it, Schiller thus writes:

'"On the whole, this personal meeting has not at all diminished the idea, great as it was, which I had previously formed of Goethe; but I doubt whether we shall ever come into any close communication with each other. Much that still interests me has already had its epoch with him. His whole nature is, from its very origin, otherwise constructed than mine; his world is not my world; our modes of conceiving things appear to be essentially different. From such a combination, no secure, substantial intimacy can result. Time will shew."'

As little did Goethe feel attracted at that time towards Schiller. We refer the reader to the volume before us, for Goethe's interesting account of the state of his mind at that period. And yet, they did come together several years afterwards, and, contrary to Schiller's then anticipations, formed a 'secure and substantial intimacy,' which lasted and strengthened till the death of Schiller, which was, during ten years, the

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chief source of pleasure and instruction to both, and which, in the annals of literature, exhibits a phenomenon as beautiful as it is rare. It was in 1787 that they first met, only, as it then seemed, to prove the impossibility of a close union between two such differently constituted natures; and in 1799 Goethe begins the six hundred and forty-fifth letter between them, in the following manner. He had just heard from Schiller of the illness of his wife. 'Your letter, my dear friend, has given me a most painful surprise. My friendship for you is so strong, that I feel whatever happens to you as if it happened to myself.' *

In 1789, being then in his thirtieth year, Schiller was appointed Professor of History at the University of Jena, in the Grand Duchy, and a few miles distant from the town of Weimar. Goethe, who appreciated Schiller's genius, notwithstanding the indisposition he then felt to a closer intercourse, used his influence in procuring this post for him. Upon this he married; and here and at Weimar he spent the rest of his too short life.

With additional zeal he now devoted himself to the study of history, and in 1791 published his *History of the thirty years' war.* Just at this time the philosophy of Kant spread itself over Germany like a thick vapor. In its course of mental purification, the universal German brain was undergoing the process of fumigation. Schiller, in whom the tendency to metaphysical abstraction was so strong, that, had he not been a poet, he probably would have been a metaphysician, became for a while a disciple of the Kantian doctrines. His was not a mind, however, to adopt a system; and he in a short time discovered, that he had not been so much enlightened as he at first supposed. The native soundness of his mind, supported by the influence of Goethe, soon dispelled this metaphysical illusion. The state of Germany, when the reign of Kant was at its height, is finely described by the anonymous author of the 'Life of Schiller.' We cannot resist the temptation to make a long extract.

'The transcendental system of the Königsberg Professor had, for the last ten years, been spreading over Germany, which it had

* 'Ihr Brief, werthester Freund, hat mich auf das unangenehmste überrascht. Unsere zustände sind so innig verwebt dass ich das was Ihnen begegnet an mir selbst fühle.'—*Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe in den Jahren* 1794 *bis* 1805.

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now filled with the most violent contentions. The powers and accomplishments of Kant were universally acknowledged; the high pretensions of his system, pretensions, it is true, such as had been a thousand times put forth, and a thousand times found wanting, still excited notice, when so backed by ability and reputation. The air of mysticism, connected with these doctrines, was attractive to the German mind, with which the vague and the vast are always pleasing qualities. The dreadful array of first principles, the forest huge of terminology and definitions, where the panting intellect of weaker men wanders as in pathless thickets, and at length sinks powerless to the earth, oppressed with fatigue, and suffocated with scholastic miasma, seemed sublime rather than appalling to the Germans; men who shrink not at toil, and to whom a certain degree of darkness appears a native element, essential for giving play to that deep meditative enthusiasm, which forms so important a feature in their character. Kant's Philosophy, accordingly, found numerous disciples, and possessed them with a zeal unexampled since the days of Pythagoras. This, in fact, resembled spiritual fanaticism rather than a calm ardor in the cause of science; Kant's warmest admirers seemed to regard him more in the light of a prophet, than of a mere earthly sage. Such admiration was of course opposed by corresponding censure; the transcendental neophytes had to encounter skeptical gainsayers as determined as themselves. Of this latter class the most remarkable were Herder and Wieland. Herder, then a clergyman of Weimar, seems never to have comprehended what he fought against so keenly; he denounced and condemned the Kantian metaphysics, because he found them heterodox. The young divines came back from the university of Jena with their minds well nigh delirious; full of strange doctrines, which they explained to the examinators of the Weimar Consistorium, in phrases that excited no idea in the heads of these reverend persons, but much horror in their hearts. Hence reprimands, and objurgations, and excessive bitterness between the applicants for ordination and those appointed to confer it; one young clergyman at Weimar shot himself on this account; heresy, and jarring, and unprofitable logic, were universal. Hence Herder's vehement attacks on this "pernicious quackery;" this delusive and destructive "system of words." Wieland strove against it for another reason. He had, all his life, been laboring to give currency among his countrymen to a species of diluted epicurism: to erect a certain smooth, and elegant, and very slender scheme of taste and morals, borrowed from our Shaftsbury and the French. All this feeble edifice the new doctrine was sweeping before it to utter ruin, with the vio-

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lence of a tornado. It grieved Wieland to see the work of half a century destroyed; he fondly imagined, that but for Kant's philosophy it might have been perennial. With skepticism quickened into action by such motives, Herder and he went forth as brother champions against the transcendental metaphysics; they were not long without a multitude of hot assailants. The uproar produced among thinking men by the conflict, has scarcely been equalled in Germany since the days of Luther. Fields were fought, and victories lost and won; nearly all the minds of the nation were, in secret or openly, arrayed on this side or on that. Goethe alone seemed altogether to retain his wonted composure; he was clear for allowing the Kantian scheme to "have its day, as all things have." Goethe had already lived to see the wisdom of this sentiment, so characteristic of his genius and turn of thought.

'In these controversies, soon pushed beyond the bounds of temperate or wholesome discussion, Schiller took no part; but the noise they made afforded him a fresh inducement to investigate a set of doctrines, so important in the general estimation. A system which promised, even with a very little plausibility, to accomplish all that Kant asserted his complete performance of; to explain the difference between Matter and Spirit, to unravel the perplexities of Necessity and Free-will; to show us the true grounds of our belief in God, and what hope nature gives us of the soul's immortality; and thus at length, after a thousand failures, to interpret the enigma of our being,—hardly needed that additional inducement, to make such a man as Schiller grasp at it with eager curiosity. His progress also was facilitated by his present circumstances; Jena had now become the chief well-sprin of Kantian doctrine, a distinction or disgrace it has ever since continued to deserve. Reinhold, one of Kant's ablest followers, was at this time Schiller's fellow teacher and daily companion; he did not fail to encourage and assist his friend in a path of study, which, as he believed, conducted to such glorious results. Under this tuition, Schiller was not long in discovering, that at least the "new philosophy was more poetical than that of Leibnitz, and had a grander character;" persuasions, which of course, confirmed him in his resolution to examine it.

'How far Schiller penetrated into the arcana of transcendentalism, it is impossible for us to say. The metaphysical and logical branches of it seem to have afforded him no solid satisfaction, or taken no firm hold of his thoughts; their influence is scarcely to be traced in any of his subsequent writings. The only department, to which he attached himself with his ordinary zeal, was that which relates to the principles of the imitative arts,

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with their moral influences, and which in the Kantian nomenclature has been designated by the term *Æsthetics*, or the doctrine of sentiments and emotions. On these subjects he already had amassed a multitude of thoughts; to see which expressed by new symbols, and arranged in systematic form, and held together by some common theory, would necessarily yield enjoyment to his intellect, and inspire him with fresh alacrity in prosecuting such researches. The new light which dawned, or seemed to dawn, upon him, in the course of these investigations, is reflected in various treatises, evincing, at least, the honest diligence with which he studied, and the fertility with which he could produce. Of these, the largest and most elaborate are the essays on *Grace and Dignity;* on *Naïve* and *Sentimental Poetry;* and the *Letters on the Æsthetic Culture of Man:* the other pieces are on *Tragic Art;* on the *Pathetic;* on the *Cause of our Delight in Tragic Objects;* on *Employing the Low and Common in Art.*

'Being cast in the mould of Kantism, or, at least, clothed in its garments, these productions, to readers unacquainted with that system, are encumbered here and there with difficulties greater than belong intrinsically to the subject. In perusing them, the uninitiated student is mortified at seeing so much powerful thought distorted, as he thinks, into such fantastic forms; the principles of reasoning, on which they rest, are apparently not those of common logic; dimness and doubt overhang their conclusions; scarcely any thing is proved in a convincing manner. But this is no strange quality in such writings. To an exoteric reader, the philosophy of Kant almost always appears to invert the common maxim: its end and aim seem not to be "to make abstruse things simple, but to make simple things abstruse." Often a proposition of inscrutable and dread aspect, when resolutely grappled with, and torn from its shady den, and its bristling entrenchments of uncouth terminology, and dragged forth into the open light of day, to be seen by the natural eye, and tried by merely human understanding, proves to be a very harmless truth, familiar to us from of old, sometimes so familiar as to be a truism. Too frequently, the anxious novice is reminded of Dryden in the *Battle of the Books:* there is a helmet of rusty iron, dark, grim, gigantic; and within it, at the farthest corner, is a head no bigger than a walnut. These are the general errors of Kantian criticism: in the present works, they are by no means of the worst or most pervading kind; and there is a fundamental merit which does more than counterbalance them. By the aid of study, the doctrine set before us can, in general, at length be comprehended; and Schiller's fine intellect, recognisa-

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ble even in its masquerade, is ever and anon peering forth in its native form, which all may understand, which all must relish, and presenting us with passages, that show like bright verdant islands in the misty sea of metaphysics.

'We have been compelled to offer these remarks on Kant's Philosophy; but it is right to add that they are the result of only very limited acquaintance with the subject. We cannot wish that any influence of ours should add a note, however feeble, to the loud and not at all melodious cry, which has been raised against it. When a class of doctrines, so involved in difficulties, yet so sanctioned by illustrious names, is set before us, curiosity must have a theory respecting them, and indolence and other humbler feelings are too ready to afford her one. To call Kant's system a laborious dream, and its adherents, crazy mystics, is a brief method; brief but false. The critic, whose philosophy includes the *craziness* of men like these, so easily and smoothly in its formulas, should render thanks to Heaven for having gifted him with science and acumen, such as few in any age or country have been gifted with. Meaner men, however, ought to recollect, that where we do not understand, we should postpone deciding, or, at least, keep our decision for our own exclusive benefit. We of England may reject this Kantian system, perhaps with reason; but it ought to be on other grounds than are yet before us. Philosophy is science, and science, as Schiller has observed, cannot always be explained in "conversations by the parlor fire," or in written treatises that resemble them. The *cui bono* of these doctrines may not, it is true, be expressible by arithmetical computations; the subject also is perplexed with obscurities, and probably, with manifold delusions; and too often its interpreters with us have been like "tenebrific stars," that "did ray out darkness" on a matter itself sufficiently dark. But what then? Is the jewel always to be found among the common dust of the highway, and always to be estimated by its value in the common judgment? It lies embosomed in the depths of the mine; rocks must be rent before it can be reached; skilful eyes and hands must separate it from the rubbish where it lies concealed, and kingly purchasers alone can prize it and buy it. This law of *ostracism* is as dangerous in science as it was of old in politics. Let us not forget that many things are true which cannot be demonstrated by the rules of *Watts's Logic;* that many truths are valuable, for which no price is given in Paternoster Row, and no preferment offered at St. Stephen's. Whoever reads these treatises of Schiller with attention, will perceive that they depend on principles of an immensely higher and more complex character than our "Essays on Taste," and our "Inquiries con-

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cerning the Freedom of the Will." The laws of criticism, which it is their purpose to establish, are derived from the inmost nature of man; the scheme of morality, which they inculcate, soars into a brighter region, very far beyond the ken of our "Utilities" and "Reflex-senses." They do not teach us "to judge of poetry and art as we judge of dinner," merely by observing the impressions it produced in us; and they *do* derive the duties and chief end of man from other grounds than the philosophy of Profit and Loss. These *Letters on Æsthetic Culture*, without the aid of any thing which the most skeptical could designate as superstition, trace out and attempt to sanction for us a system of morality, in which man, isolated on this fragment of the universe, encompassed with the boundless desolate Unknown, at war with Fate, without help or the hope of help, is confidently called upon to rise into a calm cloudless height of internal activity and peace, and *be*, what he has fondly named himself, the God of this lower world. When such are the results, who would not make an effort for the steps by which they are attained? In Schiller's treatises, it must be owned, the reader, after all exertions, will be fortunate if he can find them. Yet a second perusal will satisfy him better than the first; and among the shapeless immensities which fill the night of Kantism, and the meteoric coruscations, which perplex rather than enlighten him, he will fancy he descries some streaks of a serener radiance, which he will pray devoutly that time may purify and ripen into perfect day. The Philosophy of Kant is probably combined with errors to its very core; but perhaps also, this ponderous unmanageable dross may bear in it the everlasting gold of Truth! Mighty spirits have already labored in refining it: is it wise in us to take up with the base pewter of Utility, and renounce such projects altogether? We trust not.'*

A few years after his establishment at Jena Schiller relaxed in his professional duties, and applied himself exclusively to critical and poetical studies. He gave up the *Thalia*, and commenced, in 1795, a new journal called the *Horen*. This event made a crisis in his life, for it was the occasion of his entering into intimate association with Goethe. He sent to Goethe his Prospectus, accompanied with a letter, inviting him to contribute to the *Horen*. Goethe readily accepted the in-

* 'Are our hopes from Mr. Coleridge always to be fruitless? Sneers at the common-sense philosophy of the Scotch are of little use; it is a poor philosophy, perhaps; but not so poor as none at all, which seems to be the state of matters here at present.'

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vitation in a warm and flattering answer. The correspondence, thus commenced, was continued with growing pleasure on both sides. An intimacy and friendship was formed, which ended only with Schiller's life. Often did the two friends pass weeks in each other's house. Their correspondence, comprising nearly a thousand letters, from 1794 to 1805, has recently been published in Germany, in six volumes, and is the most valuable contribution ever made in this shape to literature. It forms a counterpart, and at the same time a contrast, to the correspondence between Byron and Moore, published about the same time; and if the one is the most entertaining epistolary series ever written, the other is the most instructive. The opinions and feelings of these two extraordinary men, on all the subjects and occasions that interested them, are here exhibited with the frankness of the most confiding friendship, and the fullness of mutual sympathy. Dissertations on principles of composition and art; comments on contemporary writers and books; discussions of plans of works; notices of English, French, and Greek literature; business communications relating to negotiations with booksellers and directors of theatres, to contributions for the *Horen* and *Almanac*, &c.;—such are the materials of these precious letters.* We shall make a few extracts from them, translating as literally as we can. The following is from Schiller's first letter to Goethe, after reading the conclusion of *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, which Goethe had just finished and sent to him in manuscript.

'*Jena, the 2d July*, 1796.

'I have now gone through again, though rapidly, all the eight books of the novel, whereof the quantity alone is so great that it occupied me two days. Properly, therefore, I ought not to write about it to-day; for the surprising and unparalleled variety that is, in the strictest sense, concealed in it, overwhelms me. I acknowledge that, as yet, although the *continuity* of it is clear to my mind, the *unity* is not: I doubt not, however, in the least, that it will be; and indeed, in works of this class, continuity constitutes more than half of the unity.

'As under these circumstances, you cannot expect from me any thing fully satisfactory, and yet desire to have something, you must be content with remarks put together without method, which, however, will not be entirely without value, inasmuch as

* As the Author of the 'Life of Schiller' makes no mention of them, we infer that they were published after his work was written.

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they will give you my freshest impressions. A worthy and truly *æsthetic* estimate of the whole work, as a work of art, is a great undertaking. The coming four months I shall devote to it entirely, and with delight. Meanwhile, I account it the most fortunate incident of my existence that I have lived to see the completion of this work; that this has taken place while my faculties are yet capable of improvement; that I can yet draw from this pure spring: and the beautiful relation there is between us makes it a kind of religion with me, to feel towards what is yours as if it were my own, and so to purify and elevate my nature that my mind may be a clear mirror, and that I may thus deserve, in a higher sense, the name of your friend. How strongly have I felt on this occasion that the Excellent is a power; that by selfish natures it can be felt but as a power; and that only where there is disinterested love can it be enjoyed.

'I cannot describe to you how deeply the truth, the beautiful vitality, the simple fullness of this work has affected me. The excitement into which it has thrown my mind will subside when I shall have perfectly mastered it, and that will be an important crisis in my being. This excitement is the effect of the Beautiful, and only of the Beautiful, and proceeds thence, that my intellect is not yet entirely in accordance with my feelings. I understand now perfectly what you mean when you say that it is strictly the Beautiful, the True, that can move you even to tears. Tranquil and deep, clear, and yet like nature unintelligible, is this work; and all, even the most trivial collateral incident, shows the clearness, the equanimity, of the mind whence it flowed.

'But I cannot yet give fit expression to my impressions, and shall therefore confine myself to the eighth book. How did you succeed in drawing together again so closely the large and widely separated circle and scene of action of persons and events? The work is like a planetary system:—all is bound together, and the Italian personages,—like comets, and as fearfully as these,—unite the system to a more remote and a greater one. These personages too, as well as Marianna and Aurelia, run out of the system, and separate themselves from it as existences foreign to it, after they have served only to give to it a poetical movement. How beautifully conceived it is, to derive the *practically* monstrous, the fearfully pathetic, in the fate of Mignon and the Harper, from the *theoretically* monstrous, from the monstrous births of the understanding, so that nothing is thereby laid to the charge of pure and healthy Nature. Superstition alone gives birth to the horrid fates that pursue Mignon and the Harper. Even Aurelia is ruined only through her masculine character,—her unnaturalness.'

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The rest of the letter consists of more detailed criticism. We add only the conclusion.

'And now adieu, my dear, my honored friend. How it moves me to think, that what we seek and scarcely find in the far distance of a favored antiquity, is to me present in you. Be surprised no longer that there are so few capable and worthy of understanding you. The wonderful naturalness, truth, and lightness of your descriptions precludes, in the herd of judges, all thought of the difficulty, the greatness of Art; and upon those who are able to understand the artist, who perceive the means with which he works, the genial power which they see in action operates with such a hostile, annihilating effect, compresses their barren self into so small a compass, that they angrily push the work from them,—yet in their hearts, though *de mauvaise grace* they are your worshippers. SCHILLER.'

What generous devotion! What noble enthusiasm! The rich intellect and pure heart of Schiller are here beautifully exhibited. Of the man and the critic, we learn much from this single letter. Something else may be learnt from it:—some worthy men may be led to doubt the soundness of the judgment of *Wilhelm Meister*, which is adverse to that of Schiller; others, who habitually mistake the diminutive image formed by a great whole upon their own brain, for its perfect figure and proportions, may be brought to the conclusion, that there is more than they have discovered in a production which Schiller's vast mind is thus stretched to compass and adequately admire, and if they cannot get insight, may learn modesty; and the literary prudes may take courage from the approbation of the lofty, pure-souled Schiller, and in reading certain portions of the work, be saved the effort of a blush.

The next extract we make, is a letter from Goethe, who was about to set out on a journey to Switzerland. Schiller had just left him, after a visit of a week.

'As a leave-taking, you could not have given me anything more agreeable and profitable than your visit of eight days. I am sure I do not deceive myself, when I look upon our being together as productive of good this time as it always is. So much has been developed for the present, and prepared for the future, that I shall set out with more contentment, inasmuch as I hope to do a good deal on the journey, and look forward on my return to your co-operation again. If we thus continue to execute different works simultaneously, and, while quietly pushing for-

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ward the greater, entertain ourselves with the smaller, we shall be able to effect much.

'I send you back the Polycrates. On Sunday I shall write you when I shall set off. Adieu: greet your dear wife for me. I wrote to-day to Schlegel.

'*Weimar, the 19th July*, 1797. GOETHE.'

Two days afterwards Schiller thus writes in answer.

'*Jena, the* 21 *July*, 1797.

'I can never part from you without something having been planted in me, and I rejoice, if in return for the much you give me, I can set you and your inward wealth in motion. Such a relation as ours, built on mutual improvement, must ever remain fresh and animated, and even gain in variety, the more harmonious it becomes, and the more contrariety of opinion between us disappears, which, with so many other persons, is all that prevents monotony. I think that by degrees we shall come to agree on every thing that can be referred to principles, and in regard to that which from its nature cannot be accounted for, we shall be near each other through feeling.'

One point on which they agree perfectly, is admiration, we may say, adoration of Shakspeare. Of him they do not speak as of other writers, but seem to look upon him as the consummate master of art,---the infallible oracle of nature; his works, not as creations of a human mind, liable, as such, to error and exception, but as the direct products of nature, fantastic, it may be, even monstrous sometimes, but all instinct with the vital essence, which, itself inscrutable to man, places them beyond the reach of human condemnation. Schiller has translated Macbeth, and we can almost say, that the mighty original has lost nothing by putting on the garb of German words. In his dramas, the study of Shakspeare is often visible, though not in the shape of direct imitation, much less of plagiarism. In the following extract, we see the impression made on him by the historical plays. The letter is dated the 23th of November, 1797. We omit the first part of it.

'I have just been reading the plays of Shakspeare which treat of the war between the two roses; and now, after finishing *Richard the Third*, am filled with a real wonder. This is one of the sublimest of tragedies, and at this moment I cannot name even another of Shakspeare's that is superior to it. The great destinies prepared in the preceding pieces are here accomplished after a truly great fashion, and according to the most sublime concep-

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tion. That the subject excludes all that is feminine, tender, sentimental, aids very much the high effect: all in it is energetic and grand: nothing common disturbs the *æsthetic* emotion: one enjoys, as it were, the pure form of the dread-tragic. A high Nemesis presides over the piece, the consciousness of which penetrates the mind from the beginning to the end. To be wondered at is it, how the poet always succeeds in forcing the unpoetic matter to render up poetic booty; and how skilfully he represents that which cannot be directly represented,—I refer to his art in using symbols where the reality cannot be exhibited. No play of Shakspeare reminds me so strongly of the Greek tragedy.

'It were really worth the trouble, to prepare this suite of eight pieces for our stage. An epoch might thereby be created. We must consult together about it.

'Adieu: my best wishes to our friend Meyer. My Wallenstein advances daily, and I am right well satisfied with it.

SCHILLER.'

Wallenstein was the beginning of a new series of dramas. Nearly ten years had elapsed since the publication of Don Carlos. Wallenstein, which consists of three parts, cost Schiller much labor, and two years of time. But the care and study bestowed on this work, besides making it his masterpiece, and the grandest poem of this age, facilitated greatly his subsequent dramatic labors. In quick succession followed *Mary Stuart*, *The Maid of Orleans*, *The Bride of Messina*, and his last, *William Tell*. For criticism on these beautiful dramas, we refer the reader to the work before us. Schiller died in the spring of 1805, being only forty-five years of age, in the vigor of his creative energies, his mind teeming with poetic plans. It is idle to regret his early death. Instead of thinking with disappointment on what he might yet have done, let us dwell on what he has done, and be joyful over the treasures which we through him possess. For himself, he died 'calmly'; for the world, he has produced works, that will live forever to instruct, delight, and elevate mankind.

In conclusion, we strongly recommend this volume to the American public. It is worthy of its great subject. The selection of it, as the first of a series which he proposes to publish, gives promise, that Mr. Benjamin's plan will be executed with a judgment proportioned to the enterprise with which it has been undertaken. This plan is, 'to present from time to time to the public a book, similar in size and appearance to

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the present volume, which shall be either an original work, a translation, or a republication.' Mr. Benjamin thus explains, in his 'general preface,' his design more fully.

'The great object in the publication of this series shall be freely to remunerate authors. If this object be encouraged, some good may be done, and some good works may be produced. If the subscriber could be, however remotely and humbly, the cause of exalting, by one volume, the literature of the age, he would feel amply rewarded. There will be those, who, with sagacious disbelief, will shake their heads on reading this preface; but the Editor, having some experience in literary matters, believes that the popular rage for temporary publications is declining, and that, with the improvement of taste, a demand for good literature is rising. The vulgar prejudice against literary men is also going out. It is no longer thought, that the man of toil, with no capital but his strength, whose "employment increases his capacity of action," deserves higher remuneration than the man of letters, who, while his mind is stored with the learning of years, is weakened by his mental labor in those physical powers, on which others confidently depend for a subsistence. Furthermore, it is believed that authorship will soon become a distinct profession in this country as it is in Europe,—and that an author will be as readily paid for his book, as a physician for his advice, a lawyer for his pleading, or a clergyman for his sermon. Necessity should not be the plea of any author. Literary men should never write gratuitously; for, however well some can afford to give away their time and talents, they should reflect that by so doing they injure others, and depreciate the value of their labor. Should there be only two or three original works published in this series, for which the proprietor would be enabled to extend a liberal compensation to authors, the cause of good literature must be in some degree advanced. It affords me gratification to state the hopeful progress of a work, intended for this series, by an author, whose well-earned fame will, on its appearance, be greatly increased, and who will be the first to lift my project to an elevation on which it will be my pride to see it placed.

'When I cannot procure original pictures for my gallery, I must be content to display copies of the first masters. The republications and translations will be edited by men reported to be most capable of the task. If I meet with a tithe of the kindness hereafter, which it has been my good fortune to experience in connexion with the present volume, I shall apprehend no difficulty, but anticipate a pleasure in my applications. I may not add

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my name, humble as it is, to these remarks, which, for their meritorious brevity and business-like style, should rather be called a Prospectus than a Preface, without fully expressing my sense of gratitude to the learned Professor, who so lately delighted a large audience by his lectures on the works of Schiller, and who has now adorned this best account of the great Poet's life, by observations not less interesting than the work itself.'

Here is a liberal estimate of what is due to literary labor. Highly gratifying must it be to all who appreciate the vocation of the man of letters, and desire to see it honored and rewarded among us, to witness such a spirit manifested in practice.

ART. II.—*The Philosophy of History.*

Cours d' Histoire Moderne, par M. GUIZOT, *Professeur d'Histoire à la Faculté des Lettres de Paris.* Paris. 1829.

WE propose in the present article to throw together some remarks upon the nature and importance of historical science, and also a few hints upon its study,—a subject which few deny to be of the last importance, but which has not always received the full attention that it deserves; so true is the observation, that we pass over many things, only because they are near and obvious and of especial moment, almost 'to fly to others which we know not of,' and which, when known, hardly reward us for our toil. We need offer no apology to our readers, for this recurrence to history; for whether we consider its great end,—the making us better and more valuable members of society,—or its particular excellence as a school of eloquence and philosophy, we shall not fail in either case to assign it a high and noble rank among the studies which influence the designs of men.

Lord Bacon admits three kinds in his classification of civil history; namely, civil proper, ecclesiastical and literary; the first of which he divides into pure and mixed. As a consideration of all these different branches and off-shoots would lead us far beyond the limits proper for an article of this kind, and that without being attended with any beneficial result, we shall confine ourselves to the subdivision which he styles

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pure; observing, moreover, that we adopt his arrangement on account of its convenience to ourselves, and not because we deem it the most just or philosophical distribution which might be suggested.

Some conception of the extent of the study of history may be formed by a slight attention to the bulk of the materials. The single branch which we have selected is subdivided by Lord Bacon likewise into three kinds; the first, *memorials*, he makes to consist of two sorts, commentaries and registers, or collections of public acts; the second, which he styles *perfect histories*, he divides according as they represent a time, an action, or a person, or in other words, into chronicles, narrations or relations which are contemporaneous, as Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian war, and Lives. *Antiquities* constitute the third species, and comprehend whatever is recovered from monuments, traditions, private records and the like. To these he adds *annals*, which have reference to matters of state, and *journals*, which record facts of minor importance. We may receive this system with more confidence and consideration, perhaps, inasmuch as M. d'Alembert has adopted it in his *Système figuré des connoissances humaines*,* without the slightest variation.

It will be readily perceived that the bulk of historical materials must thus be immense, each of these distinct divisions containing a great number of works. In looking over an old established library, that of Paris for instance, or those of the older and even the more recent of the German universities, we are struck with the seeming disproportion between historical treatises and those in any other branch of knowledge. The former continue to increase, and in a geometrical ratio with time; the tendency to accumulation being such, undoubtedly, on account of the increase of subjects, in the multiplication of our race, in the progress of the arts of peace, and in the redemption of nations from ignorance. Every age superadds its Pelion upon the Ossa of the one preceding. The mass has thus become fearfully great, even to the most hardy and ambitious of the votaries of history. It becomes then an important question how we may render it available, and at the same time not fritter away its spirit and its utility, as has been the case with many of the methods which have been devised for the purpose

* *French Encyclopedia.* Vol. I.

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of abridging labor, in the shape of partial histories, tables, epitomes and abridgements. We must, however, see the necessity first, before we set about to discover the remedy.

Facts are the first objects of attention in history, and this mainly for two reasons; in the first place, because they are of personal interest and come home to the bosom of every individual, and secondly, because they are more readily ascertained and understood than principles. That they are the first objects of attention is distinctly proved in the character of the effusions of the Grecian heroic bards, known as the cyclic poets, who sought to perpetuate in rude song the exploits of warriors and adventurers, as in the accounts of the Argonautic expedition and of the siege and conquest of Troy. Their subjects were invariably traditional or historical, a character which always more or less belonged to Greek poetry. On this fact we may be allowed further to remark, that we should not reject too hastily the accounts which are so received, as fabulous and purely poetical. The garb which they assumed was one of necessity, and the most appropriate for the age, as the only one calculated to ensure their preservation. History in later times has obtained a more exclusive and regular form, the result of the improvement among men and its own increased importance. For our purpose, however, it is sufficient that such was the fact; that truth, however much it might be mixed with fable, was the basis of their poetry.

As history, at least that branch of it which we are considering, relates to human conduct, it must begin to exist as soon as man begins to act or to extend his ideas beyond his mere animal existence. It is strictly personal, and we find accordingly that minstrelsy was invoked to lend its aid to immortalize, and to gratify the vanity of the strong and valiant.

So, on the other hand, their personal nature rendered the ascertainment of historical facts, in primitive times, comparatively easy. Whole tribes moved but as individuals; there were no superior private concerns to distract the attention of a part from the policy of the nation; for the abundance of the earth rendered an easy sustenance to the scattered clans of inhabitants. The facts of history were thus peculiarly liable to be known. In general, too, it treats of subjects, clear, public, and distinct, and not, like the natural sciences, of those operations which result from the occult laws of motion and matter;

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where it is obscure, it is from the uncertainty of human motives, in regard to which every one can and will be his own interpreter, though all are not equally well qualified for the task. Then, in particular, it was simple, and not darkened by the intricacies and subtleties of refined legislation and Machiavelian arts. History is recognised by man in every condition; the other sciences require an advanced state of civilization, and presuppose a great progress in intellectual philosophy; we may safely conclude, then, that *history must necessarily be the earliest of the sciences;* and as such, its contributions to the stock of human knowledge must be the most copious.

On this point of the great abundance of historical materials, we may adduce the testimony and authority of a very learned writer: 'The universal progress of science during the two last centuries,' says Dr. Robertson, 'the art of printing and other obvious causes, have filled Europe with such a multiplicity of histories and with such vast collections of historical materials, that the term of human life is too short for the study or even the perusal of them.' 'It is necessary then,' he continues, 'not only for those who are called to conduct the affairs of nations, but for such as enquire and reason concerning them, to remain satisfied with a general knowledge of distant events, and to confine their study of history in detail chiefly to that period in which the several states of Europe having become intimately connected, the operations of one power are so felt by all as to influence their councils and to regulate their measures.'* The idea of such a limitation is a good one, though it will be seen that the same studies are not suitable for different generations, much less for different nations.

The years of an antediluvian would hardly be adequate to master this great bulk of fact, unless some system and order or principle of study be adopted, which may dispense with the greater part. We are far from flattering any one that a plan can be devised which will relieve him from labor, even severe labor,—for

> '——there are secrets which who knows not now,
> Must, ere he reach them, climb the heapy Alps
> Of science; and devote seven years to toil.'

Yet we know that much can be accomplished in the saving of time, by keeping continually before us the nature, end, and im-

* Preface to Charles V.

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portance of history, and by studying it in a proper spirit of improvement, and with some definite object in view, which shall fasten in the mind whatever it once admits and desires to retain.

Several works have been written professedly for the purpose of facilitating the study of history. The evil seems to have been first particularly noticed and sought to be corrected by John Bodin, who published his Introduction or *method* for the easy acquisition of history, at Paris, in 1569;* this was subsequently reprinted several times, both in Germany and Holland. His method has received the commendation of many eminent critics, though it has found a very stern and severe one in Lord Bolingbroke, who has condemned it as tedious, unphilosophical and useless. As to its utility, Bolingbroke's practical habits gave him the best means of judging, though upon the whole we think that he is unnecessarily caustic. Bodin's work at least opened the way, and as such publications do not always spring into existence, Minerva-like, perfect and complete, we may also look upon it with indulgence.

This essay was succeeded by many others, some of which occupied the same field; others deviated according to the opinions as to the want to be supplied; and not a few referred to particular tenets of philosophy or religion as especially worthy of consideration. Of this last kind is the work of Father Tomasini or Thomasini; and of a similar cast is 'The Spirit of Laws,' of Montesquieu. The title of Tomasin's book sufficiently shows its nature and its peculiar characteristic.†

A different device, and one which has been very extensively followed, was that of Reineccius and Samuel Puffendorf, whom we may esteem as the fathers of those equivocal works, historical abridgments or compends. Lord Bacon looked upon epitomes in no kind spirit, as being 'those that have fretted and corroded the sound bodies of many excellent histories, and wrought them into base and unprofitable dregs.' We have often regretted to see a valuable work rendered almost useless by those who, in the cant of the day, are styled diligent compilers. The spirit of the production is inevitably lost; if it deserve to be read it should not be cut down; if it do not,

* *Joannis Bodini Methodus ad facilem Historiarum cognitionem.* Quarto. Paris, 1569.

† *Méthode pour étudier Chrétiennement les Historiens.*

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then it should be suffered to rest in the neglect it merits. Do not give us the highly useful matter of another, not diluted to be sure, but, what is worse, robbed of its most essential ingredients. The work of Puffendorf, however, is similar in scope and design to the Universal History of Voltaire, and is very frequently referred to by French writers.

About a century afterwards, appeared the '*Praelectiones Hyemales*,' of Degory Wheare, Camden professor of history at Oxford, published first in Latin and subsequently in English. The introductory discourse is replete with good sense, and contains the results of extensive observation; the whole is far from being either tedious or useless. The work was several times reprinted in Germany, where it seems to have acquired a greater reputation than in England.

The first part of the eighteenth century produced the work of M. Fresnoy, Librarian to Prince Eugene. If the popularity of a work be any criterion of its value, this must be ranked very high indeed; for, besides numerous French, German and Dutch editions, it was also translated into Italian and English; into the former language by Sebastian Coleti, and into the latter by Richard Rawlinson. It may be consulted with advantage, though the method of historical study which it proposes is of little value.

The Introductions or Universal Histories of Rollin, Voltaire and others, and the Disquisitions of Bolingbroke, Volney, Morrel, and those of a similar character, are more familiar to our readers; all these aim at advancing the study of history, either by preparing the mind for greater exertions, or by providing it with the critical armor which shall defend it from the assaults of error.

Such are some of the *methods*, as they are (most improperly) styled, which are intended to obviate the difficulty which presents itself in historical study, from the immensity of the materials. Most of them are worthless, and it is only where the nature and importance of the science are insisted upon as necessary to be fully understood, in order to form a firm basis for subsequent study, that they become of any value. A correct and clear conception of what history is, we believe to be the great secret which is to open to us its stores, and we shall accordingly devote the greater part of the residue of this article to a brief prosecution of this enquiry. To undertake the acquisition of any science without some idea of its utility and

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importance, we hold to be the act of no sane mind, or at least of none that is bent upon husbanding time with a view to self improvement; for the only proper inducement would be wanting, while the consequences would be of the most baleful nature. It is the intuitive power of properly cultivated minds, or of those denominated geniuses, to form at once a correct opinion of the usefulness of any subject of attention; which power constitutes one part of their superiority over ordinary minds; their landmarks are immediately fixed, their cynosure is clearly perceived, and they know, at every step which they take, the precise bearing in which they are placed. With minds of their mould and culture, it is easy to apprehend strongly the nature of their subject; those which are differently constituted are under a more imperative necessity to pursue a similar course. When we have a clear conception of the true nature and tests of historic truth, we feel in pursuing the study that we do not grope in the dark; our vision becomes distinct, and there is need of exertion only, to accomplish our purpose; the bandages which blinded us are removed by this simple operation, and we are no longer ignorant of the way or whither we are bound; we know what is our precise object and can best judge of the *means necessary to attain it.* Without such a conception the adventurer in history is at best but a sorry mariner, tossed upon a wide sea, from which the heavens have muffled the stars, and over which they have thrown the impenetrable mantle of darkness; he has no port to which he may steer his bark, no polar star by which he can guide it with certainty.

History may be defined to be the science of human nature, as shown in a full, correct, and philosophical account of the experiments which have been tried upon humanity ever since its first existence. We say a *science*, because it has principles of its own, evolved by a correct mode of reasoning from well determined facts. Modern history is particularly entitled to this character; it differs from the ancient in that it is more philosophical, that it looks into the constitution and very soul of society, that it regards man more as a social being than as a mere individual one, and that it examines the nature of commercial relations,---a vital subject concerning the improvement and well being of man, but which had no interest for the ancients. Besides, it acts upon the same subject indeed, but upon one whose interests and condition have been greatly

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changed. We admire the simplicity of Herodotus, but that is all; we are far from transferring his spirit into modern history. The sagacity and bold views of human nature of Thucydides are but a part of the requisites in our historian, who, being a philosopher as well as a politician, contemplates man in a more important light, as a being of reason more than of impulsive feeling; as one whose relations are more multitudinous, more complicated, but more reducible to order. Yet how difficult is the task to arrange and to classify the numerous facts; to discover the springs of human action, to determine the proper influence of every event, and to state each principle in its proper terms; then to reduce the whole to one harmonious system of mutual dependencies, to infuse that philosophical alchymy, without which the product is no more history, than blank verse, 'without a certain poetical chemistry to concentrate, to fuse, to sublime the style and to separate its measures from the rhythm of periodical prose,' would be poetry. The principles of history are widely spread; its facts more so; no Newton has yet arisen who has traced them all to some one grand general law; the induction is incomplete, or the master spirit has not yet appeared. Still it is a prolific study; it teaches men to think more and to *memorize* less in modern times, by disburthening them of undigested facts, and presenting in their stead principles which are the elements of reflection; thus its truths become incorporated with their minds, and serve as monitors for the present and the future. The causes of this difference between ancient and modern history, the reader will find stated at large in a former volume.*

But the principles of history are certain, distinct and applicable, as well as those of other sciences, though not perhaps in the same particular degree; which is owing not to their vagueness and uncertainty, but to the mutability of the subject. Matter is always uniform, and therefore, similarly experimented upon, will always produce the same result. Men on the contrary change, not in themselves individually so much as in their relations to each other. How different is the construction of modern society from that even of civilized Greece and Italy; manners, occupations and sentiments, modes of thought, living, amusement, how changed! All this renders the principles of our science less extensive, yet they are nevertheless

* See Volume XXVIII. Art: Ancient and Modern History.

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great and momentous. Look at some of them; those which by common consent are firmly established,—that we are improving beings, the noblest truth that science ever taught,—that society and the arts of peace foster this improvement,—that there is a necessity of positive regulations, voluntarily submitted to by each for the benefit of the whole, called *laws*, which especially regard the well being of society,—that the mutual wants of societies produce commerce, which reacts most beneficially in producing liberality of sentiment, correcting prejudices, and creating wealth and power,—that the fine arts flourish most among a wealthy people,—that luxury unrestrained is a curse to any nation, but considered as the grand stimulant to industry, and consequently modified thereby, becomes of great advantage,—that an enlightened liberty alone can preserve itself,—that the virtues of hospitality belong rather to an agricultural than a commercial people. We might continue the catalogue to a great length; but let us see what the brief chapter of our own history establishes. It settles that equality is a safe basis for government in this advanced state of the world,—that toleration in religious matters, and the absence of a church establishment, are not inconsistent with the success of religion or the stability of political society,—that the publicity of the operations of government tends in general to secure a just, economical and prudent administration of its affairs,—that the liberty of the press is a conservative principle in a republic,—that the licentiousness of the same engine is a proper subject for judicial animadversion, when ascertained by a full legal investigation.

We conceive then that history has sufficient claims to the title of a science,*—a science which has man for its subject.

* The tenacity with which some have denied these claims is unaccountable. The proposition seems to us so palpable, that we can hardly justify ourselves in dwelling so long upon it. Lord Brougham, in an article on the 'objects, advantages, and pleasures of science,' originally published in the English *Library of Useful Knowledge*, and republished in the American work of a similar title, has this remark, after making a general division of the sciences;—'connected with all the sciences and subservient to them, is history or the record of facts relating to all kinds of knowledge.' That history, considered in the limited sense of the word, as a bare recital of circumstances and events, may be restricted to this meaning, we do not deny; but it seems to us a 'fell swoop' to take that from the circle of the sciences, which has principles as determined and distinct as any of those which

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As a science it is to him a sure guide; a remembrancer of things which happened before he was born; a faithful record of past wisdom.* How feeble and impotent would he be with nothing but personal experience, which comes too late to be taken advantage of; standing on a point in eternity, that point would become immeasurably less valuable. But with history,—the experience of ages past,—he has become a seer who can penetrate the dark future. Nestor lived three ages, and was considered the wisest of men; and so he was. We are now all Nestors; to be sure we have not antediluvian longevity, but we have in its stead postdiluvian knowledge; though our years be less, we may reasonably doubt whether our lives are shorter. This is the case not only with students of history but with the whole civilized world, who are enjoying the fruits of the experience of their predecessors, as it has been exhibited to them by the learned and wise. History is an

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are suffered to remain. The error can only be attributed to the fanciful division which he has adopted, that all science relates either to *quantity*, or to *matter*, or to *mind*, without regarding that branch which refers to *human nature* as displayed in human conduct. We cannot determine where the learned lord would place our modern science of political economy, which from the nature of the subject might be assigned to either of his divisions. Perhaps he may deem it all

> 'Cant,—heartless cant, and that Economy
> Cold, and miscalled "political!"'

This oversight is the more remarkable, because he himself states, but a page or two before, that science 'in its most comprehensive sense only means *knowledge*, and in its ordinary sense, means *knowledge reduced to a system.*' History has not assumed that regular and systematic order which would entitle it to a place among the *sciences* in the ordinary sense of the term, yet it is a branch of knowledge which may be *taught, remembered and applied*, and moreover, has principles of its own, which, though the result of the facts recorded, are independent of and separable from them. No one thinks of calling the history or account of the experiments in the science of chemistry, the science itself; so the history of the experiments upon man displays a science of human nature, independent of the account. The necessity of forming a clear idea of the term History, as we have used it, is rendered evident. Lord Bolingbroke styles History, the SCIENCE *of mankind.* This is not a mere dispute about words, for it is obvious from the exclusive division which Lord Brougham has adopted, that he understands the term history in the same *sense as ourselves.*

* Historia vero testis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magistra vitae, nuntia vetustatis. *Cic. de Orat.* C. 2. § 36.

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universal science; its truths regard every human being; it is a mirror for all. Falsehood may often be its apparel, but truth is always its substance. The good, the bad, the wise and unwise are by it impartially judged, and their characters and actions put upon a faithful and unalterable record, to be preserved for the use of their successors; as we are told by the profound and elegant Roman historian, that the province of history is to establish a tribunal, where princes and private men may be tried and adjudged after death, like that which formerly existed among the Egyptians.

Unlike most other sciences, the principles of History are frequently applied without being separated from their subjects, or in other words we adopt them by imitation and the force of example. Worthy models are set before us to regulate our conduct; examples of the opposite character to be avoided. Lord Bolingbroke says of history, that it is 'philosophy teaching by example.' There is a vividness and personal applicability in this method which render it of the highest importance. These examples are neither more nor less than living instances, and make impressions of the strongest kind.* Dry precept has always been considered as inferior to them, so that the apophthegm of Seneca, *Longum iter est per praecepta, breve et efficax per exempla,*—has been admitted as correct in every language. There is much truth in Degory Wheare's quaint description of the end of history. 'This is the most healthful and profitable attendant of the knowledge of history, that you may contemplate the instructions of a variety of examples united in one illustrious monument, and from thence take such things as are useful to thee or to thy country, and that thou mayst wisely consider that which has an ill beginning will have an ill end, and so avoid it.'† The mind is flattered in catching the instruction which they communicate; it is left to judge for itself, to adopt, discriminate and reject. It receives a powerful ally in the feelings; the sympathies are awakened; the access to the reason is rendered more easy. We see the actual operation; become in a measure parties to it; and feel its completion. So easily do we lose sight of our own identity.

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* Segnius irritant animos demissa per aures
Quam quae sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quae
Ipse sibi tradit spectator. *Horat. De Art. Poet.*

Praelectiones Hyemales. Introd.

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We know that there is great danger in this submission as it were, to a foreign control, that we shall abandon ourselves entirely to the guidance of others, and those too of another age or people, very differently situated from ourselves. But this only evinces the necessity for a proper maturity of mind, that can wisely discriminate before we attempt the study; in the time of youth, we must have those who will select for us; this dependence human nature must always own in the spring-tide of existence. And were there some content to plod on forever in the track of others, without permitting an excursive thought to enter their minds, yet even this evil were a small one, compared with the benefit that is derived by the great majority in possessing the 'vantage ground' of past experience, from which they may direct their own conduct with a proper view of present circumstances. Besides, there are soaring principles enough in our nature to keep us from pausing in the path of improvement, and from these we have most to apprehend. The truth is yet to be learned and felt, as inculcated in the phrase of Milton;—

> '—who aspires must down as low
> As high he soared, obnoxious first or last
> To basest things.'

Let this wholesome principle of action be once fully recognised, and we shall have little to fear from the contracting influence of this study. The mind is apt to spurn particulars; but it should be *induced* from what is small to that which is great, and not let down from what is more general and comprehensive to that which is more particular.

History should be read in a proper spirit in order to reap its full fruits; not taken up as pastime 'to soothe our indolence or to gratify our vanity.' It must be *studied*, diligently conned over, its truths incorporated with our minds. Unless we do this, how shall we ever improve ourselves, and thus act beneficially upon society; or develope those germs of virtue and knowledge, which exist within us? There is a great error abroad in respect of this matter. The study of history is spoken of in the same light as the study of poetry, as if their values were at all comparable. We mean no disparagement to the latter, for we feel that we have derived from it the most substantial benefits, and the solace of many an hour; we know that it has laid before us the chart of the human heart. But history aims

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at the noblest of purposes; it includes within its broad scope the progress of poetry, of the fine arts, and of all the sciences. It concerns the very existence of society, and of consequence every thing which depends upon the social system. The study of history aims at nothing less than the general advancement of mankind. How numerous and multifarious are the principles, how universally applicable are the examples afforded by it! The simplicity of its method of instruction presents a strong argument in favor of its utility. Example, addressing itself to the simplest faculties of the mind, requires no powers or habits of abstraction. The untutored reader, who has not looked into the depth of things, can understand its lessons as readily as the man of refinement, and as clearly; for this reason our Saviour disseminated his doctrines by the lively method of parables,* which are to be looked upon as similar, in their operation and effect, to historical exemplification. The fable of Menenius Agrippa, recorded by Livy, was on the same account so effectual in causing the Roman people to evacuate the Mons Sacer, when all the common means of persuasion and even force were unavailing. Another advantage springing from example is, that it presupposes experience at the expense of others; we act, but at another's cost.

In adopting the examples recorded in history, we only carry into the more momentous affairs of life, what we are in the daily practice of observing in our minor concerns. If we investigate, we shall discover that we act almost altogether by imitation; we naturally seek support, for we are weak and dependent creatures at the best. Authority is always admitted as a first argument; and it is highly proper that it is so; for, though deference for authority may occasionally support prejudice and error, it leads the mind to think, to examine, and to

* We have somewhere met with the following beautiful passage, stated to have been extracted from that charming and once exceedingly popular work, The Defence of Poesy, by Sir Philip Sydney. 'Even our Saviour could as well have given the moral common-places of uncharitableness and humbleness, as the divine narration of Lazarus and Dives; or of disobedience and mercy, as the heavenly discourse of the lost child and gracious father; but that his thorough-searching wisdom knew that the estate of Dives burning in hell, and of Lazarus in Abraham's bosom, *would more constantly*, as it were, *inhabit both the memory and the judgment.*'

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judge with caution and prudence. The evil which it may cause is nothing, compared to the injury which might be experienced from a heedless and unmindful self-confidence.

An important question, intimately connected with this enquiry into the nature of history, and on which Volney and others have laid great stress, here arises, relative to *historical credibility.* It will be readily perceived that, if we are to make the results of past experience and the examples of times gone by, principles and models for our own conduct, we should have every reasonable certainty of their truth.

A historian may be either a narrator of past occurrences or of those of his own time; and accordingly as he is the one or the other of these, will our confidence in his relation be materially affected. There is another contingency which makes a third species of historians; where individuals chronicle their own exploits or those transactions in which they may have borne a part. These three different kinds of historic writing were carried almost to perfection among the ancients. Here the Greeks were the predecessors and superiors of the rest of the world; their historians were deficient in but one thing,—they did not contemplate man in his social relations; commerce, manufactures, domestic society in all its variety, rarely exercised their pens; but wars and games, conquests and confederacies, individual patriotism and public disinterestedness, are their continual themes. Such are the masterpieces of Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, the earliest writers in the three varieties of history which we have enumerated.

Each of these departments has its peculiar difficulties. The historian of a past age has the disadvantage of length of time; accounts reach him magnified by the obscurity of a dark age, or perverted by the prejudice of a superstitious one. They possess the true quality of fame as expressed by the poet;—

'Ingrediturque solo, et caput inter nubila condit.'

Minor events, of little consequence except to explain those of greater moment, are completely lost, so that the writer meets 'with many blanks and spaces, which he must be forced to fill up out of his own wit and conjecture.' On the other hand, the contemporary historian treats of events, perhaps incomplete. The sea may be calmed for a season, until

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some powerful reaction again swells its surface, and overwhelms the voyager who may have too soon congratulated himself on an escape. He has other embarrassments of a powerful nature in a political bias of his own; in the secrecy with which men cloak their present intentions; in the jealousy of tyrannical power; in the strength of prejudice honestly maintained. Every one, especially in this reading and printing age, is a Zoilus, who has a critical taste to be pleased; and rare indeed is the occasion when men can speak what they believe, without meeting with some to condemn them.* The difficulty is much increased in the case of the writer, who gives us an account of transactions with which he has himself been connected. He will give us a more detailed account, but it will be tinctured with personal feeling; he must be something more than mortal to look upon his own acts, candidly, impartially, and with calmness. Thus do we find reason to receive every history with caution from its peculiar character; there are, moreover, difficulties common to all, which of course result from the various temperaments of writers. They may amuse us with speculation when they should inform us with fact; they may paint man as he ought to be, and forget to depict him as he was and is. The character given of Montesquieu, by one not less eminent, should be that of every historian.†

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* Rara temporum felicitas, ubi sentire quae velis, et quae sentias dicere licet. *Tacit. Hist.* C. I. § 1.

† Dans cet important ouvrage (L'Esprit des Lois) M. de Montesquieu, sans s'appesantir, à l'exemple de ceux qui l'ont précédé, sur des discussions métaphysiques relatives à l'homme supposé dans un état d'abstraction; sans se borner comme d'autres, à considérer certains peuples dans quelques relations ou circonstances particulières; envisage les habitans de l'univers dans l'état réel où ils sont et dans tous les rapports qu'ils peuvent avoir entre eux. La plupart des autres écrivains en ce genre sont, presque toujours, ou de simples moralistes, ou de simples jurisconsultes, ou même quelquefois de simples théologiens. Pour lui, l'homme de tous les pays et de toutes les nations, il s'occupe moins de ce que le devoir exige de nous, que des moyens par lesquels on peut nous obliger de le remplir; de la perfection métaphysique des lois, que de celle dont la nature humaine les rend susceptibles; des lois qu'on a faites, que de celles qu'on a dû faire; des lois d'un peuple particulier, que de celles de tous les peuples. Ainsi, en se comparant luimême à ceux qui ont couru avant lui cette grande et noble carrière, il a pu dire, comme le Corrège, quand il eut vu les ouvrages de ses rivaux. *Et moi aussi, je suis peintre.*
Eloge de Montesquieu, par M. D'Alembert.

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The first great step, then, in studying history, is to secure ourselves against the errors of the writer. Here all the faculties and powers of the mind are called into requisition; at the outset we have to canvass and decide upon a most material point; we begin immediately to feel one benefit in the study; we are induced to reflection; the mind is disciplined, it is prepared for the assaults of error, it is fortified in truth; we become judges, while the historian states the case, and we hear and determine, or should do so, impartially.

A further duty which we have to discharge, is to examine the strength of the evidence and the character of the witnesses. The rules of our courts of jurisprudence are generally applicable here, except that their strictness is somewhat softened in consequence of the nature of the tribunal; we judge and condemn men, but we cannot punish them. But the test is much nicer in history than in the natural sciences, where the experiment may be easily repeated, and the truth or error in the description immediately discovered. In the former, the operation is long, tedious and generally incapable of being repeated. We have, therefore, to sift the accounts most carefully in order to separate the extraneous matter, which a succession of ages, or the prejudice of party or sectional feeling, may have introduced; we have to go back to the fountain-head and ascertain the character of the witnesses, their opportunities to become acquainted with the subject, the degree of their intelligence, and a thousand other circumstances, which, taken collectively, have a material effect upon the faith to be accorded to the whole.

There is one other touchstone by which all history must be tried, nice in its management and generally certain in its tests; we mean its *strong intrinsic probability.* We say *strong*, because the end of history is too important to admit any thing equivocal; and *intrinsic*, meaning its agreeableness to the settled and well-determined laws of nature, and opportuneness to the time and other circumstances. Where these are strong and transcend a bare probability, we may place a great, if not an implicit reliance upon the particular accounts. It is a mode of reasoning which is admitted into our best systems of philosophy, and amounts to the argument of presumption, which

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is a fundamental maxim in the common law.* Yet much circumspection is to be used in its application. Probability is judged of, according to the prevalence of certain doctrines, and the character of the age, and people; or in other words, it changes, and is not always identical in its nature. For instance, —we have just emerged from an age, when witchcraft and its kindred superstitions constituted articles in the creed of general belief; and consequently, when accounts of such transactions, creditable in their narrators, and veritable in the witnesses, were readily admitted as being in the highest degree probable and true. But the philosophy of the present day discourages all credence in the appearance and intervention of disembodied spirits; it discards all statements which aver the special interference of any order of beings, whether of supernal or infernal character, as improbable, though not impossible. Perhaps some future age may see cause to reverse the decision of this, when further facts shall have been elicited, and all more philosophically arranged. In every case, therefore, we should be careful to refer to the most indubitable and well ascertained principles, in order that we may judge upon the strongest intrinsic probability.

These few simple rules, which in practice should be carried out fully in their numerous ramifications, deserve the careful attention of every student of history, who may be anxious on the one side to admit that only which is true, and, on the other, to avoid the fatal skepticism in relation to this science, which has exerted so powerful an influence over many minds. By a careful observance of them, he will not fail to derive the full benefits of history, if it be combined with zeal and industry in the pursuit. On the nature of these benefits and the importance of the science, we shall now offer a few observations.

The great object of history is to teach us how we may become good citizens, not only as the ancients understood the word, but as its present broad and comprehensive meaning denotes,—considering every individual as a member of the great human family, and as such bound to acts of kindness and charity to every other. In the prosecution of this end, it informs

* See some excellent remarks in Whately's 'Elements of Rhetoric,' Third Edition. Page 45 et seq. et al.

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us how we may enact our brief part on life's stage with decency and propriety and honor; it impresses upon us a broad principle of ethics as the foundation of our conduct,---that the improvement of our fellows no less than our own advancement is a bounden duty, the discharge of which will materially contribute to our happiness; it teaches us *how* we may fulfil our offices, as well as *what* they are; it provides the means by which error may be confounded, and truth vindicated,—means at once simple, clear and complete; it strengthens the love of virtue, and creates an abhorrence of vice; in a word, it inculcates a liberal philosophy, a piety known by its deeds, and a wide philanthropy, in every relation in which we may be placed, whether of a political nature or belonging to the gentler connexions of social life.

If we regard philosophy as that wisdom which opens to us the future, and presents us with the means by which we may pass through it with safety, then it must be admitted that history makes the true philosopher, the one whose knowledge is most practically useful. The success of some and the failure of others, are landmarks and beacons for our direction. We have the field notes of those who have gone before us, which, though generally hasty and incomplete, dispense with much trouble to ourselves, and teach us the true method and conduct of life.* The past is the archetype of the future; an imperfect edition, which is to serve as the basis for an improved one thereafter. It differs from that which succeeds, in that it contains more errors, which once known can be corrected, and in that it points out new occasions of improvement, which may be taken advantage of. Thus we become gifted with a second sight, about which there is no mystery, no sinful compact, no pretension to a partial providence; with it we are seers, entitled to the appellation of wise, and prepared to determine our own fate and that of others. No configuration of stars is to be sought; our own conduct is the only horoscope which needs be cast.

But we anticipate. There are those who deny the utility of history; nay more, who deprecate the study. And why? The sciolist will say, that it teaches only what has been, a tissue of errors and truths which has brought us to what we are, but can carry us no farther, inasmuch as we are improving

* Ἐξ ὧν συνιδόντι καλλιστην παιδειαν ἡγητεον πρὸς ἀληθινὸν βιόν, τὴν ἐκ τῆς πραγματικῆς ἱστορίας περιγιγνομένην ἐμπειρίαν. *Polyb. Tom.* I., *p.* 60. *Ed. Ernesti.*

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intelligences, whose second step should always be in advance of the first, not over the same ground. He will maintain that it tends to keep man stationary, by imposing upon him the rules of the past for his guidance; that it supersedes the use or exertion of the strong principles of invention and experiment, the true springs of improvement; that it degrades humanity by making man a mere imitative animal. Perhaps, he will add, being somewhat skeptical, that were the study on the most favorable supposition productive of advantage, all history is false; its writers, partisans, and witnesses suborned or interested. He may complain that it is even written for effect, with impure motive; that self-interest is always consulted, favorite theories sought to be established, tenets of particular faiths promulgated; society, law and government, philosophy, morals and religion, made to subserve private views, and sectarian partialities.

We have already spoken of the antidotes for such poison. The first part of this objection is sought to be established by referring to the state of Europe. The political condition of that fair portion of the globe, it is contended, is and has been for a long time stationary, and *that* on account of the study of history or an habitual reference to its principles. A little reflection will show the fallacy of this opinion. The great bulk of the people there, however much they may be enlightened in regard to the truths of physical science, know little of the principles of government. The progress of the nations of Europe in the natural sciences and in the fine arts has been rapid, steady and triumphant, but always at the expense of political truths. The policy of Lewis the Fourteenth has been that of every despot who has occupied a throne in modern Europe; namely, to draw off the attention of the people from their civil condition by diverting it to other objects, and especially to some of the sciences where the pursuit after new truths becomes an absorbing passion. This has succeeded thus far, and perhaps may succeed in future; but the prevalence of knowledge in the other branches of learning may, for a time at least, exist in connexion with complete ignorance of political science. Men engaged in other pursuits can feel no inclination to enter upon a new study which promises neither fame nor profit, and is environed with difficulties and dangers of the most embarrassing kind.

The administration of the government has thus been there

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secured by a few to their own control and for their own advantage. They found it convenient to assert the divine right of kings, and to denounce the republican principle,—*salus populi, suprema lex*,—as impious. If a daring spirit proclaimed the great truth of equality, and attempted to rouse his fellows, he found chains already forged for him, a Bastile already gaping for a victim. Thus was the reformer treated; or perhaps the barking cur received a sop which, alas for human nature! bought him from his duty. Few have the moral courage to attempt reform; the path is beset with difficulties; no reliance can be placed upon assistance, even from those who are most concerned in the correction of abuse. They have their prejudices, which ignorance has fastened upon them; they have their fears, which their weakness but too well justifies. Great revolutions have always been effected either by the co-operation of some of the influential classes with the citizens, or else by some extraordinary violence which has roused the indignation of an united people,—like those which expelled the last of the regal dynasty from the Imperial city, and which forced Charles the Tenth to abdicate his throne. We may thank Heaven that the 'Rubicon of man's awakened rights' has been passed, and that despots have been taught the consequences. Men are no longer to be kept in ignorance by a few persons interested in the continuance of rotten institutions; they are not to be frightened from their rights, to be bought through their necessities, or to be diverted by the wily policy of those who would play upon their passions for their own benefit.

Thus have the people of Europe been kept from the proper study of history by deceit and fraud, by force and corruption, and by an artful policy under the guise of encouragement to literature and science. The great mass of the people have been led to believe, that they were but an insignificant part in the state; that the machinery of government, though working at their expense and for their good, was the exclusive right of a few. They have not been permitted to unfold the long scroll of the past, to learn their natural and inviolable rights; to be advised of the encroachments of power; to discover behind the scene the secrets of political management, and see, in the language of Chancellor Oxenstiern to his son, *quàm parva sapientia regitur mundus*. They have been

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duped into an assent to the divine right, which has made them mere *automata*, to raise the note of triumph as the superior management of the wire-pullers has been successful. To pretend to intelligence on political matters, has been in them a crime, to claim sovereignty treason.

But though we would earnestly vindicate historical science from the charges thus preferred, we do not enrol ourselves among those who set up history as an infallible standard; as the guide in every emergency, and as giving us sure and unerring canons for our observance under all circumstances. It establishes many principles which are indisputable; but there are cases where their application must be modified, and where they will fail altogether. The opinion, therefore, so strenuously maintained by many distinguished writers in Germany on this point, seems to us to demand some limitations before we admit it as correct. Thucydides, in his work, intended to be, as it has become, a rich inheritance to posterity, speaking of the massacre made by the Corcyreans of their enemies within the city, and of the opposing factions of the democracy and the aristocracy, observes, that such things as had then happened *will continue to occur as long as human nature remains the same, with such variations in form as may result from the circumstances of each particular case.** This reveals to us the true secret of the use and application of historical principles. They require particular attention to be paid to the circumstances of each case; which circumstances regard as well the intellectual and moral character of the nation or people as their physical condition. The past only shadows forth the future; its lessons are of the first importance, but they are not and have no pretensions to be considered as absolutely binding.

It is the study of history that will ensure to man a political progress; by which we mean a continual adaptation of government to the new wants and new relations that may spring up in society, in consequence of the farther amelioration of our condition. It is a mere chimera to suppose that the acme of political benefits has been reached; as much so as the supposition, that the perfection of humanity has been attained. The

* Καὶ ἐπέπεσε πολλὰ καὶ χαλεπὰ κατὰ στάσιν ταῖς πόλεσι, γιγνόμενα μὲν, καὶ ἀεὶ ἐσόμενα, ἕως ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾖ μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ἡσυχαίτερα καὶ τοῖς ἰδίοισι διηλλαγμένα ὡς ἂν ἕκασται ἀι μεταβολαὶ τῶν ξυντυχιῶν ἐφιστῶνται. *Thucyd. Tom.* III., § 82.

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two are far beyond *us*, and they will ever march hand in hand, yielding each other mutual support. Civil liberty is far from being an absolute idea; it is never precise; in one state of society it has one meaning, in another quite a different one. It is regulated by the intelligence, habits, and situations of those who enjoy it. If it mean any thing definite, it is in the abstract, and as such we may define it to be a *freedom adapted to the genius and character of a people;* not that one man possesses at any time a right over the person of another, but that it is necessary in all cases to yield to the force of circumstances, which may demand that some portion of personal rights be given up for the welfare of society, according as it is more or less intelligent. How frequently do we hear the phrase,—'a political servitude inconsistent with the present state of society, or of the world,' which plainly implies this mutation in political constitutions, which it must be recollected are expressions of political rights, only so far as it is expedient to adopt them. When the state of society demands a change, history teaches us how we may best effect it.

Let us look around and about us; and then ask the questions;—how has society become what it is?—how has government reached its present refinement?—how have the laws become so accurately adjusted to the tempers and wants of mankind?—how have morals assumed the rank of a comprehensive and all important science?—how have commerce, manufactures, and agriculture attained their improved state?—how have all the arts of peace flourished? All these results will be attributed to various concurring causes; but what means stand so eminent as the study of history? That civilized man is above the savage,—above the animal which Lord Monboddo has declared him once to have been,—is in consequence of the study of past experience. We advance, not by invention, but by reflection upon the knowledge derived from former perceptions. If this seem to coincide with the Leibnitzian dogma of *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*, we can only say that the isthmus between the different opinions is to us sufficiently plain and safe.

Finally, we value history for the sublime truth it inculcates, of a wise and superintending Providence, whose care watches over the habitations of men, and whose benignity gladdens their path of duty. In the overthrow of haughty nations, in the demolition of castled cities, in the building up of poor and

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weak nations, in the great mutations of power, wealth and glory, we see how little dependence can be placed upon human efforts, how the progress of events is governed entirely by the high designs of the Author and Ruler of the Universe. History utters but one sentiment on this point; it tells of the triumph of virtue and the misery of moral degradation. The cold skepticism of the author of the Decline and Fall of Rome, had chilled his heart long before he made history his business or his study. Gibbon had been led to the extreme of superstition; the rebound of a mind so original and profound threw him into the opposite state. The English historian began with doubting; in his own language, he was 'ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and could look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another.' History could not convert a Hume, for when—

> 'Obduracy takes place, callous and tough,
> The reprobated race grow judgment proof.'

Foreign causes, in spite of history, thus influenced the error of these distinguished writers. They were previously determined against Christianity, and were therefore inclined to contemplate its dark spots, which, like those upon the orb of day, only mitigate its overpowering splendor.

The method to be pursued in the practical study of history opens too wide a field for a full discussion in this place; especially as opinions have conflicted so much in relation to it. The age when history should be taken up has given rise to very discordant rules. One writer insists that it should precede all other studies, and cites the example of Cato the Censor, who, according to Plutarch, took such peculiar care in the instruction of his son as to draw up an historical work for his express use at a very tender age, that he might form himself upon the models of the great men of his own country, who were most renowned for their probity and virtue.* Such a course requires a careful discrimination on the part of the instructer, who has it thus in his power to instil almost any system of principles, and so completely, that years of subsequent study will be requisite to unlearn them if it be found necessary. Early associations cling to us with a remarkable tenacity, and

* Rollin. See his method of teaching and studying the belles-lettres. Vol. 3.

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frequently defy the utmost exertion of reason, philosophy and length of time to loosen. For ourselves, we incline to the opinion of Degory Wheare and Volney, that history should be little studied till mature years and a previous acquaintance with many of the sciences,—geography, natural philosophy, mathematics, and so forth,—shall have prepared the mind to think for itself and to understand what is read.

Great danger is to be apprehended from indiscriminate reading. Those who devour with an anaconda voracity whatever falls in their way, will derive no advantage therefrom, but will acquire habits of inattention, such as will prevent them from ever using the rude mass of knowledge which they may accumulate. We admire the strain of the following remarks of St. John. 'Some,' says he, in speaking of histories, 'are to be read, some are to be studied; and some may be neglected entirely, not only without detriment, but with advantage. Some are the proper object of one man's curiosity, some of another's and some of all men's; but all history is not an object of curiosity for any man. He who improperly, wantonly, and absurdly makes it so, indulges a sort of canine appetite: the curiosity of one, like the hunger of the other, devours ravenously and without distinction whatever falls in its way, but neither of them digests.'

There is a system and an order to be observed. More general histories are to be first taken up, and those especially which relate to one's own country, for in that the student feels most interest. The attention to others becomes a matter of course, and in degree according to their connexion and attitude as respects his own; the study of one begets a passion for another, and each step encourages to greater exertion and more daring enterprise. The intellectual appetite is to be dieted according to its strength and character; fare corresponding to the state of reading is to be set before it; it should be sometimes whetted by provocations, but never disgusted by that which is unseasonable or offensive.

But where shall we obtain proper histories for our youth? We have few or none of sterling merit written with a particular view to our institutions, religion and government. We put into the hands of the enquirer works for the most part inimical to our form of government, which embrace every opportunity to indulge in flings and sneers against it, and which never view its principles impartially. We cannot expect from them any

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thing else, for their doctrines will be accommodated to that system in which their authors have been taught to repose belief; at least these will not write history in reference to other institutions than their own. This natural and we may add excusable prejudice belongs to every writer of annals; and, indeed, we should be exceeding loth to adopt the conclusions of any one so situated who should not be influenced by it. A deference is due to public opinion when it is fairly ascertained.

The deficiency of which we speak in our own country is becoming more and more evident. It has given birth to a trait in our national character, which is the most odious in the sight of foreigners; we mean, our vanity. Our system works well, and, contrasted with the despotisms of Europe, it is a source of continued satisfaction; but we have no work which has fully developed its admirable qualities, and we therefore become, each and all, expounders of them. The habit is growing upon us and has already taken deep root. In the absence of such a history, it may be pardonable indeed, but our notions are likely to be crude and extravagant and capable of much injury to us, in the estimation of those even who have sufficient liberality of feeling to trace them to their right source.

It is not our own history only, but that of the whole human race, which is to be written in accordance with the principles here unfolded and established. The accomplishment of such a great work would be most propitious. It would be the nucleus of a distinct national literature. It would at once give us an original national character. The successful completion of such an universal history, would place us on equal terms with our opponents; we should have it in our power to dispute every inch of ground, for in it would be marked the true effect of every event, wherein it was adverse, and wherein auspicious to the great cause of political rights; we should no longer see through a glass darkly. The existence of such a work would materially assist in improving our system and in correcting the faults of our age. *Nulla aetas vacavit à culpa.* Democracies must not be hid under a bushel; they require the broad light of day. They are perfectible inasmuch as they contemplate the well-being of the people, who will discover their interest, and exercise their power accordingly. Our history would give us a starting point, and, founded in the broad principle that 'all men are born free and equal,' would present our past experience with its errors on this subject, so that we might avoid them.

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Such a work was projected, and we believe in part completed by Dr. Ramsay, but his tragical death put an end to all his designs. No one else to our knowledge has undertaken the task; and a fearful and responsible one it is. The individual who engages in it must have an intimate acquaintance with the genius and economy of our institutions, a sagacity to detect their influence upon the social, moral, and political condition of man, a profound and extensive erudition, and talents of the first order. He must be deeply imbued with the spirit of the age,—rather in advance than behind it; yet he must admit no fact on doubtful authority nor make any fact bend to his theories. He must have every quality required in the best historians, and some in addition; he must be not only an enquirer after truth, an efficient advocate in vindicating it, an artist and a man, but he must be practically a republican. His work too must be different from anything that has yet been written.

The value of such a work to the student of history would be incalculable. The observation of Cicero,—*nescire quod antea quam natus sis acciderit, id est semper esse puerum*,—is most true; but past experience may be improperly studied; it may be connected with much that is poisonous, which the unskilled cannot detect. An especial duty devolves upon us, as members of a free state; we require a correct knowledge of the past as to the great political and civil rights of man. The decline into despotism is insensible and rapid; the ascent to freedom, when once lost, is on the other hand slow, difficult and costly. Corrupt ambition is indigenous under all forms of government, but grows perhaps most luxuriantly in democracies. It is a rank weed, to be kept down by unremitted care and exertion. How strong, then, the necessity that proper histories should be placed in the hands of the student, whether boy or adult! Besides, how proper it is that we should understand ourselves, when our example is felt in almost every quarter of the globe! France is regenerated, England is shaking off hoary abuse, Spain and Portugal are struggling with an apparent probability of success for improved political institutions:—who can doubt that the successful experiment here has produced these efforts for freedom?

The selection of proper works is the more important, in that the time which can be allotted to the study of history is very short compared with the immensity of the materials, and

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that we have little opportunity to unlearn what is improper, and to supply its place by new studies. In the few hints which we have ventured to offer on this subject, we have had it in view to aid the student in so directing his researches that he may acquire, with the least possible labor, a valuable store of historical information:—the value being determined in this case, not so much by the bulk and extension as by the capacity of being applied to the existing state of things. History is a practical science, and of importance only so far as it can be used. It takes cognizance of the highest privileges of civilized beings, and so far as it assists us in defining them, is of the greatest value. We must then calculate its worth according to its practical application.

The preceding remarks have been partly induced by the conviction, that the taste of the age is undergoing a salutary change in regard to reading. The prevailing disposition to consult *utility* has been long and widely insisted upon, but we doubt if it has ever been so strongly marked as at present. The public have been so long deluged with a flood of worthless trash in the shape of novels, that they begin at last to look upon them with nausea and disgust. The preëminent talents of Sir Walter Scott redeemed this species of writing from the insipidity into which it had fallen. His example has excited a host of imitators, who have followed him,—with few exceptions and these *longo intervallo*,—with very indifferent success. The load has now become intolerable. We hail the appearance of 'Family Libraries,' 'Cyclopedias,' and 'Cabinets' of knowledge, with the highest gratification, as evidences of a more healthy state of the public mind. The degree of patronage which these collections are receiving, warrants us in the belief that the principle of improvement is universally active.

We are pleased to see that historical works constitute so large a portion of these publications. It is a bright and encouraging omen; it manifests an increasing solicitude for political knowledge and an anxious regard for political rights and privileges. It is a heart-stirring prospect for the lover of humanity;—for all who desire the well-being of man. We are to study diligently how this spirit may be best directed, and its effects rendered lasting. We have contributed our mite fearfully; for we are aware that it may often require the labor of several generations to eradicate a single well-established error.

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ART III.—*Roman Literature.*

1. *Bibliotheca Classica Latina, sive Collectio Auctorum Classicorum Latinorum, cum Notis et Indicibus.* Paris. 1832.
2. *Family Classical Library,* No. 47. London. 1833.

THE age in which we live is often described as an age of intellect; nor is this a misapplied denomination:—it is one which is forcibly borne out by the signs of the times. Among the most prominent and convincing of these signs, may be mentioned the extraordinary and resistless impulse given to the human mind by the diffusion of education.

In these latter days, we defer not to our brother man because he possesses title or territorial influence; we defer to his reason alone, and on this exclusive ground, that his reason is cultivated. This is indeed a proud distinction, and without any prejudice to other operative sources, we may fairly trace one of its principal causes to the daily extending progress of sound classical information.

The era is for ever gone by, when a taste for ancient literature,—the fount from which so much instruction and delight circulate throughout the world,—was to be imbibed only in the purlieus of monastic seclusion, or in the society of wrangling gownsmen. Classical knowledge generally, and particularly Latin classical knowledge, the subject with which we are now more especially concerned, is not only widely scattered abroad, but is also preëminently influential. This is a fact which we regard with peculiar complacency, since it so happily solves the long contested point, as to the practical tendency and use of classical learning in the common intercourse of life.

We rejoice that this question, so variously and keenly discussed, admits of such full and satisfactory demonstration.

The great and justly earned popularity of the works mentioned at the head of this article, may be referred to in support of the conclusion, that classical literature has become an object of current and unlimited favor. The abundance and undisputed success of similar labors, impart still further weight to this inference.

In directing our notice to the voluminous but judiciously

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selected compilation of Lemaire, we cannot forbear bestowing upon it a hearty tribute of eulogy. It was certainly a prodigious enterprise, and now that, after a careful editorial superintendence of fourteen years, it has come to a termination, we may safely pronounce it a performance in every respect creditable both to the spirit, learning and perseverance of the individuals in immediate connexion with it, and also to the genius and reputation of the nation at large. The editions of the different Roman authors selected, are those of the most approved classical scholars in France, Germany, and Holland. The type is in the very best mould of the widely celebrated Didot Press.

With regard to the Family Classical Library, our readers are aware of the flattering encouragment it receives in England, and, we may add, in this country. Its propitious association with the erudite name of Valpy may be one powerful cause of its popularity, but another still more cogent is doubtless to be found in the intrinsic value of the work itself.

The humblest citizen, who wishes to keep pace with the prevailing spirit of the age, can now gratify this noble ambition, without any serious inconvenience to his purse or his time. A university education is no longer indispensable to him, for an acquaintance with the exploits and revolutions of bygone days. He may, in his own vernacular language, at a moderate expense, and in a comparatively very brief period, familiarize himself with the character and prowess of that extraordinary people, among whom the high attributes of honor and patriotism were so ardently cherished.

It is from a deliberate conviction of the beneficial result attending the perusal and study, of the venerable memorials of antiquity, in exalting and perpetuating the generous sympathies of our nature, that we so cordially hail the publication of authentic editions of the Latin classics, whether in an original or a translated form. Persuaded of the salutary effects resulting to a community from such a direction of the mind, we have embraced all fitting occasions for turning the public attention to this interesting subject.

In repeating our recommendation of the study of the Latin classics, we would not simply base it on their importance as exhaustless sources of taste,—as finished models of all that is elegant in expression and lofty in sentiment. We maintain,

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that in studying the Roman authors a still nobler end is proposed, the practical exercise of the moral powers.

In this faithful mirror of so many busy and changeful ages, we may perceive the salutary fact, strikingly elucidated, of the intimate analogy between the destiny of a single individual and that of a whole nation. As the habitual sway of virtuous and honorable principles forms the happiness of the one, so does it in like manner form that of the other. We may moreover observe, in closely viewing this subject, the designs of a wise and beneficent Providence, beautifully evolved in the instrumentality of the Roman people for the progressive intellectual improvement of less enlightened nations, preparatory to the more complete introduction and establishment of moral and religious truth. Such are the enlarged and ameliorating conceptions, presented to our minds by the perusal of Roman Literature. And it is only when we correctly and profitably apply such conceptions, that one leading object of our education can be substantially prosecuted.

Let us be distinctly understood. What is meant by education? Properly speaking, education is the formation of elevated moral and religious principles, and the training of the mind to the practical application of those principles in society. Now, as conduct emanates from principles, it is evident that future usefulness and comfort depend on the early and enlightened direction of the understanding. 'I call,' says Milton, 'a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully and magnanimously, all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war.' *

On this ground, then, as constituting one of the most useful sources of mental exercise for the conscientious discharge of duty, the study of the Roman classics must hold a prominent rank. How very favorable would be the effect upon the intellectual aspect of numbers of both sexes, if they devoted to those instructive authors, but a small portion of the many hours they devote to the ephemeral and inane productions which constantly stream from the public press. While we maintain that the general tendency of the Roman writers is to invigorate the mind by the infusion of energetic ideas,

* Prose Works, Vol. I. page 277.

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and an unsophisticated masculine taste, such reading on the contrary as that now reprehended, is 'a degrading waste of precious time, and has even a bad effect on the feelings and the judgment.'*

But it is utterly improbable that mere sentimentalism and its tinsel offspring can ever seriously engage the attention of minds, accustomed to the vigorous and fervid delineations of Cæsar, Livy, and Tacitus,† to the manly and overpowering eloquence of Cicero, to the harmonious strains of Virgil,‡ and to the nice and graceful touches of Horace.§

How preëminently worthy these and many other distinguished authors of antiquity are of being consulted and perused for the mature and exalted formation of character, is, beyond all contradiction, obvious.

We deny not, indeed, that with respect to the matter discussed by those ancient writers, and in a review of the constitution, government and current usages of the ancient republics, and more especially that of Rome, there is much to condemn; but in our retrospect of bygone times and practices, it is neither accordant with philosophy nor with fairness, to dwell on the exceptionable parts exclusively. Blemishes there are, some of them attributable to accidental circumstances, and others to the original weakness of our nature. The purest political constitutions have their dark side, and there is no country without its factious and ungrateful citizens. A Petilius, a Clodius, and a Mark Antony, are to be found in all large communities.

But we are to extend our view, and chiefly repose our contemplations on that sublime and disinterested tone of national character, with which the Romans, more than any other people upon earth, were imbued. Is there, in fact, any one hallowed and generous emotion that vibrates through the heart of man, which we may not, among them, discover in the most fascinating form? Are they not unrivalled among the nations of the world, for that profusion of truly estimable qualities, which

* Introductory Essay to the Library of Useful Knowledge, page 36.

† 'In these three authors, the language of Rome is displayed in its utmost purity and perfection.' *Schlegel's History of Literature.* Vol. I. page 155.

‡ 'Degli altri poëti onore e lume.' *Dante*, Tom. I. page 17.

§ 'Plenus est jucunditatis et gratiæ.' *Quintil.* Orat. lib. 10. C. 1.

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have secured for them the admiration of the latest posterity? In the attractive exhibition of Roman deportment, shone forth with conspicuous lustre grandeur of soul in adversity,* moderation and clemency in victory,† aggrandizing sagacity based on liberal policy,‡ deep respect for the sanctions of religion,§ enthusiastic devotedness to country,‖ valor, perseverance, wisdom, justice, modesty, incorruptible integrity and inextinguishable love of liberty. This love of liberty was not confined to the few, it was national; and as a dearly cherished principle, it became perhaps the more widely spread and firmly settled, inasmuch as its original production and final triumph were inseparably connected with disaster, agony and death.**

To all this we may add the self-denial of the Romans, and their severe adherence to the strictest rules of discipline and personal restraint. So intimately were their amusements even blended with their future character and renown, that 'their exercises comprehended whatever could add strength to the body, activity to the limbs, or grace to the motions.'†† The toil to which a Roman soldier was obliged to submit seems, in modern times, absolutely incredible.‡‡ It was all borne cheerfully, however, and amid every extreme of privation, because his country demanded his services.

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* Tit. Liv. lib. 23. C. 13.

† Tit. Liv. lib. 45.

‡ 'Ils favorisèrent les villes qui faisoient le commerce, quoiqu'elles ne fussent pas sujettes; ainsi ils augmentèrent, par la cession de plusieurs pays, la puissance de Marseille.' *Oeuvres de Montesquieu.* Tom. II. p. 137.

§ This was nobly illustrated in their treatment of the prisoners who escaped from the camp of Hannibal after the fatal battle of Cannae, *τὸν δὲ σοφισάμενον πρὸς τὸ λῦσαι τὸν ὅρκον, δήσαντες ἀποκατέσησαν πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους.* —*Polyb.* Tom. II., p. 83.

‖ 'Il y avoit ceci de particulier chez les Romains, qu'ils mêloient quelque sentiment religieux à l'amour qu'ils avoient pour leur patrie.' *Montesquieu.* Tom. IV. p. 74.

** 'Scevola, Curzio, i tre Decij avidi della gloria, la cercano ne' tormenti e nella morte per la pubblica salute. Il popolo non vede la causa, ma osserva gli effetti. La virtù sola apparisce, la passione si nasconde. L'entusiasmo dell'individuo si comunica alla moltitudine; l'energia d'una passione si comunica all'altra; il popolo corre ove l'eroe lo chiama.' *Filangieri,—Scienza Della Legislazione.* Tom. V. p. 42.

†† Gibbon's Rome. Vol. I. p. 18.

‡‡ Cicero Tuscul. Disput. lib. 2. p. 70.

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In the whole annals of mankind, there is not to be found a more convincing instance of the advantages which accrue to a people from temperance, bravery, order, equity and emulation.* And in the perusal of the Roman history, we have fully unfolded to us those great springs of character, which led to events so important and extraordinary. To the principles of conduct which the Romans professed to entertain, they were ever steady in practice. And if it be true, that there is no effectual method of repressing vice of all kinds, but by eagerly and unceasingly inculcating the ennobling maxims of uprightness, honor and religion, we may then, as a luminous example of this fact, safely refer to the pure and uncorrupted era of the commonwealth of Rome.

Another great advantage attending the study of the Latin classics, results from the mutual and indivisible connexion between purity and dignity of national character, and the ascending progress of masculine literary refinement. We would not be understood to insinuate that this mutual relation between vigorous intellectual taste, and high moral probity, is, in all cases, a proper standard of decision in forming an estimate of character. By no means. It is always possible that individuals, and even a considerable proportion of a community, may be referred to, who are in possession of the former, but are destitute of the latter. Yet in alluding to the general and prevailing tone of national sentiment, particularly during the brightest period of the Roman republic, the affirmation now made appears to be well grounded. Of its correctness, a reference to the history and authors of Rome will constitute the best proof.

Before the Roman mind was contaminated by foreign relations, a national sensitiveness to unsullied honor, justice and patriotism throbbed in the bosom of every citizen,—and when occasions were displayed for the performance of heroic deeds, the test was never evaded.

To the existence of this principle, universally dominant during the primitive times of the Republic, all their historians bear witness. And the great medium for unfolding those ruling sentiments of public taste, which involved national worth and national prosperity, was eloquence.

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* Priestley's Lectures on History. p. 215.

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A talent for eloquence arose from the very nature and elements of a republican constitution; in its exercise it exhibited a just and impressive representation of contemporaneous feeling:—the more so, as it was often required for the discharge of important functions and responsibilities.*

The early orators of Rome were straight forward, high minded men, whose civic rank frequently combined the vocations of magistrate, priest, and general, and as the criterion of their personal accomplishments was singularly elevated, their eloquence was the artless impassioned outpouring of the heart, while their language was consistently substantiated in hardy and marvellous achievements.

The ancient Greeks and Romans are indeed peculiar among all the nations on the globe, for the solid and momentous application which they made of eloquence. And the results arising from the impulse thus communicated to the mind, sufficiently attest the depth of that prospective sagacity, which among them rendered skill in oratory so necessary a branch of intellectual education.† But with the cultivation of their language, they also cultivated their taste and reason. The opportunities constantly recurring of addressing large assemblies of their countrymen, concerning the most important state transactions, exceedingly strengthened this bias. Hence it was that the Greek and Latin languages attained an accuracy, a beauty, a majesty and a moral influence, which enabled them to produce in the forum and the battle-field, the wonderful effects described in history.

Sentiments were then as much prized as actions. The former were regarded as the unequivocal pledges of the latter, and were appreciated accordingly. The great motive of discourse was to instruct, to convince, to persuade. For this paramount end, all the resources and energies of the mind were

* 'Atque ego illum, quem instituo, Romanum quemdam velim esse sapientem, qui non secretis disputationibus, sed rerum experimentis atque operibus, veré civilem virum exhibeat.' *Quintil. Lib.* 12. C. 2.

† Il faut se souvenir que Crassus, Antoine, Hortensius, Cicéron, furent élevés aux premières dignités de la république, parcequ'ils étoient éloquens. On en trouve la raison dans la nature même du gouvernement. Quand un talent est d'un usage necessaire et habituel pour quiconque se mêle de l' administration, il faut absolument, que ceux qui le possèdent dans un degré supérieur, soient honorés et revérés.' *Laharpe, Cours de Littérature.* Tome II. p. 346.

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necessarily called into active play. The ear, the heart, the imagination and the judgment, were powerfully assailed. To accomplish such objects, gigantic labor was of course indispensable,—and this labor was stimulated by the most active competition. It was often bestowed from early youth upwards, with a degree of unyielding, indefatigable diligence that seems past all belief.

It was in this career of hardy intellectual emulation, that Cicero, for example, habitually trod, and it was thus that he was enabled to achieve those astonishing feats of literary effort, which appear almost beyond the grasp of human industry.

Almost extemporaneously he delivered his incomparable oration for Roscius. In less than two months, he wrote his three books on the Nature of the Gods, two on Divination, and his Laelius and Cato. Within the brief period of three years, he composed all his Philosophical Works, and his Treatises on Rhetoric, not merely those which are in our possession, but many besides, which are irrecoverably lost.

All this he accomplished, let us remember, not during a course of uninterrupted leisure, but in the very whirl of high and responsible public functions.

Whoever, then, expects to approach the fame and perfection of the Roman orator, must likewise possess his soul, his language, his experience, his ready and assiduous habits of active business. The youth who profitably peruses the imperishable volumes of Cicero, cannot fail to have his feelings elevated, and his understanding enlightened. And in calling to mind what is recorded of St. Augustine, namely, that his three leading wishes, in reference to the past, were to see Solomon on the throne of Israel, St. Paul in the pulpit, and ancient Rome in its glory, the young student, whose bosom beats high with dignified aspirations, will consider as one of the highest sources of gratification, that would have resulted from the accomplishment of the third of these wishes, the opportunity which it would have afforded of being present in the Forum at the moment when the thrilling tones of the great Orator were blighting his enemies, and infusing the healing balm of consolation into the hearts of his friends and fellow-citizens.

In examining the history of the life of Cicero, the student will, for his encouragement, perceive that sooner or later the

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honorable toil of early application and self-improvement, is noticed and rewarded. Thus it was in ancient Rome, where men, who had no other recommendation than their personal merits, reached those eminent dignities at which long descended birth did not always arrive. We see this in the case of Cicero himself, who, though born in an obscure town of Italy, obtained the consulship, which was refused to Catiline, to Cethegus, and to Lentulus, all of them belonging to the most illustrious families in Rome.

But in the path to honorable distinction, so open and so anxiously pursued in ancient Rome, were to be found not only those who spoke well and emphatically, but also those who wrote and composed for posterity. And the secret, why the early Roman authors have retained an undying popularity in after ages, is the successful transfusion of national portraiture into their pages. Display, or the mere ostentation of eloquence, was with them a very subordinate end, and this is precisely the reason why the noble simplicity of their delineations is rendered so profoundly interesting. In their descriptions, there reign a freshness, an originality, a force and a decorum, which entirely baffle all merely imitative exertion. And wherefore was it so? Because the early historians of Rome had to commemorate civil, family and individual acts of unwonted intrepidity and self-devotedness. Their writings teemed with chivalrous deeds. Ancestral renown, and the proud recollection of the past, animated every page. This was the root of Roman character, and from this root did the transcendent power of Rome grow up. The Scipios and the Catos, Sylla, Crassus, Lucullus, Brutus, Pompey, Cæsar, and Cicero, were either orators and historians themselves, or the friends and patrons of eloquence and history.

But no sooner was imperial rule substituted for the free institutions of a republic, than the decline of Roman grandeur became perceptible. Neither the authority of Augustus, nor the favor of Mæcenas, could healthfully reinvigorate the public taste. The body politic was marked in all its parts with symptoms of decay. The will of the many was now represented by the will of the sovereign. That sovereign was frequently a tyrant or a buffoon, from whose polluting contact the pure spirit of liberty indignantly recoiled. In such disastrous circumstances, free agency was extinguished, and

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imperial satellites reared up their ignominious influence on the ruin of once unfettered Rome. Personal worth and national weal were weighed in the balance against the voluptuous and degrading enjoyments of sense, and found wanting. Even the highest earthly trust that can devolve on human beings,—that of educating their children, of ameliorating the hearts, and regulating the principles and affections of the young,—was consigned to the care of slaves. The touching eloquence of their forefathers degenerated into the pedantry of unmeaning declamation, and their historical compositions into records of error and adulation.

By none is this wide spread national corruption more unfeignedly lamented, than by the Romans themselves. The works of Persius, Martial, Juvenal and Seneca abound in such regrets, and the amiable and learned Quinctilian, perhaps more than any other Latin author, makes us feel the truth of these remarks.

Yet notwithstanding so melancholy a retrogradation of character among the Romans, the genius of their departed fame long continued to exhibit some glimpses of its former energy. Even the imperial purple was occasionally discovered in the arena of literary glory.

We know that Augustus extended his especial countenance to Virgil and Horace.* Tiberius maintained a seminary, exclusively appropriated for grammarians. Claudius composed various works, and re-established the Museum of Alexandria.

Nero caused some of the finest monuments of Grecian ingenuity to be removed to Rome. He too was a poet, a musician, both instrumental and vocal,† a critic, an orator, and was from early youth initiated in the fine arts.‡

Vespasian, though proverbially parsimonious, settled annuities on many learned men.§ Domitian revered Quinctilian as his bosom friend. Trajan corresponded with the younger

* Virg.—'in quo non apud divum Augustum gratiâ caruit.'—*De Oratoribus Dialogus*, p. 8.

† 'Ne' Giuochi Istmici un Tragico, miglior musico che Politico, perchè non ebbe l'avvertenza di desistere dal canto, per lasciar comparir quel di Nerone, che dovea certamente essere più mirabile del suo, fu strangolato sul Teatro, in faccia di tutta la Grecia.'—*Muratori, Annali D'Italia*, Tom. I. p. 156.

‡ 'Liberales disciplinas omnes ferè puer attigit.'—*Sueton. in vita Neron.*

§ Tiraboschi, Storia Della Letteratura Italiana.—Tom. II. p. 220.

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Pliny in terms of the most affectionate intimacy. Adrian, whose experience had been so fully ripened by foreign travel,* was not only a learned prince, but in founding the first public University in Rome, gave a more signal proof of his personal attachment to the interests of literature, than any of his predecessors.†

But after all, the eclipse of Roman splendor had set in. The body politic was diseased, and both the intellectual and moral faculties suffered in consequence. The change from a republican to a military government, was decisive of the greatness and even of the existence of Rome. And it is no less curious than instructive, to remark how distinctly the decline of character is perceptible in literature.

Not all the influence of the Emperors could prevent the downward progress. The evil was beyond all remedy. Pliny and Tacitus made a noble effort to retrieve the decayed fame of their country, but with all their literary championship, they are far inferior to their ancestors in the union of vigor and simplicity. The former, in his justly celebrated letters, exhibits an ambitious straining after ornament, totally at variance with the flowing ease required for familiar epistolary intercourse. The latter paints dark and troublous times with the hand of a master indeed,‡ but in the gloomy and ambiguous coloring of philosophical bitterness.

Quinctilian helped to cast a literary irradiation across the thickening darkness of his age, but who would think of comparing his works, valuable as they certainly are, with those of Tully? Seneca too, with all his acknowledged excellence, failed by moral invective to reclaim the bad taste or the vicious habits of his countrymen. Even in *his* writings, philosophical and dramatic, we discover indications of the progressive decline of the national literature.

Of Lucan (to say nothing respecting his glaring inconsistencies of sentiment,)§ it may be remarked that his poem, though vivid and stirring,‖ is destitute of real epic grandeur.

* Gibbon, Vol. I. p. 122.

† Giannone, Istoria civile di Napoli. Tom. I. p. 53.

‡ 'As long as it shall be thought "that the proper study of mankind is man," so long the Annals of Tacitus will be the school of moral as well as political knowledge.'—*Murphy's Essay on the Life and Genius of Tacitus.* Page 76.

§ Schlegel's History of Literature. Vol. I. page 152.

‖ Lucanus, ardens et concitatus, et sententiis clarissimus, et, ut di-

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In the Satires of Juvenal, we have a keen, unsparing attack on the flagitious practices of his time, but we seek in vain for the graceful poetic drapery, which is every where discoverable in those of Horace. In fine, Suetonius, Florus, Quintus Curtius, Justin, Silius Italicus, and Claudian, with all their undenied abilities, furnish,—both in the matter and style of their writings,—still further proofs of the truth of the position advanced,—that the shades of a dark and ominous eclipse were gradually mantling over the moral character and literary fame of ancient Rome.

But in order to benefit effectually by the experience of the past, we must decide for ourselves, by personal study and research. That these observations may in some measure contribute to this beneficial end, is our sincere desire. Certain it is, that, in what has been said above, we have by no means overrated the incalculable importance of the end. In support of this opinion, we refer to the following recorded attestation of one of the ablest scholars and most distinguished men of modern times. 'Study, I beseech you, (says he) so to store your minds with the exquisite learning of former ages, that you may always possess within yourselves sources of rational and refined enjoyment, which will enable you to set at nought the grosser pleasures of sense, whereof other men are slaves.'*

ART. IV.—*Usury, and the Usury Laws.*

Report of a Committee of the General Court of Massachusetts upon the Petition of W. Tuckerman and Others for the Repeal of the Laws against Usury. Boston. 1834.

AT the last session of the General Court of this Commonwealth, a petition was presented on behalf of a large number of the most intelligent and respectable citizens of Boston, engaged in active business, for a repeal of the laws against

cam quod sentio, magis oratoribus quam poetis adnumerandus. *Quinctil. Institut. Orator.* lib. 10. cap. 1.

* Brougham's Inaugural Discourse before the University of Glasgow. Page 6.

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usury. The petition was committed to a Committee of the two branches, which had been raised for the purpose of investigating the conduct of the banks, and probably gave the greater part of its attention to that subject, which was thought at the time to be of more urgent importance. In their Report, which accompanied the Bill, prohibiting certain supposed abuses in the administration of the Banks, the Committee alluded briefly to the Usury Laws, and while they expressed their approbation of the mitigation effected by the statutes of 1825 and 1826, and intimated the opinion that a further change, or perhaps a total repeal of those laws might be ultimately beneficial, considered it inexpedient to do any thing about the matter in the present unsettled state of the financial concerns of the country.

The petition was afterwards taken from the files of the Senate, and committed to another joint select Committee, raised for this special purpose. This Committee made a brief report against the principle of the Usury Laws, accompanied by a bill providing for the repeal of all acts, and parts of acts, which restrain or prohibit the taking of more than six per cent. interest, so far as they apply to bills of exchange and promissory notes, payable in three months from the day of their date; but expressly excepting from the operation of the proposed law notes of hand secured by a mortgage of real estate, or payable on demand, and bills of exchange payable at sight. The provisions of this Bill were nearly the same with those of a section, intended to effect the same general object, which was introduced into the late act of the British Parliament, for renewing the charter of the Bank of England.

The course of the proceedings on this subject, to which we have briefly adverted, necessarily delayed very much the consideration of it by the General Court upon its merits. The Bill came up in the Senate, on one of the last days of the session, and being thought of too much consequence to be decided upon with precipitation, was referred, after a short debate, to the next General Court. It was, in fact, hardly to be expected or desired, that so important a change in the laws should be carried through on its first proposition, and without mature and repeated discussion. The subject will undoubtedly be resumed at the next, or some subsequent session of the Legislature: and in the mean time, we have thought that a somewhat more extended and detailed expo-

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sition of the facts and principles relating to it, than could conveniently be introduced into any Legislative Report, might not be without its use in furnishing the public in general, and particularly the citizens who may be called to act upon it, with materials upon which to form an opinion.*

* As the proceedings of the Legislature were not published in the newspapers, and are of course not generally known, it may be proper to insert here, for the further elucidation of the subject, the petition of the citizens of Boston and the Report of the Committee, which consisted of Messrs. Everett of Suffolk and Shattuck of Middlesex for the Senate, and Messrs. White of Boston, Greene of New-Bedford, and Warner of Northampton, for the House of Representatives.

PETITION FOR THE REPEAL OF THE USURY LAWS.

'The undersigned, citizens of Boston, having long experienced the inconveniences arising from the existing Usury Laws of Massachusetts, and being persuaded that the Honorable Legislature will, whenever the subject is properly brought before them, provide an adequate remedy for the evils complained of, have deemed it suitable and proper to appear as petitioners before that honorable body, setting forth in their petition the inconveniences to which the present laws give rise, and praying such a modification of those laws as will, in their opinion, remove the evil.

'We, your petitioners, would therefore respectfully represent,—that, in our judgment, the existing Usury Laws, so far as they limit the rate of interest, are founded on erroneous principles, and are at variance with the commercial spirit of the age. We think that every article of human traffic, whether money or any other thing, is alike subject to fluctuation of *value*, and that consequently the market *price* of them all is constantly liable to change. We think that the price of money, or, more properly speaking, the price of its use, not less than the price of lumber, corn, tobacco, cotton, or any other great commercial staple, is, and must be regulated by the extent of the demand in the market, and that every attempt to fix the value and render the price of any of these articles invariable, is not only vain, but wholly unjust; and that it is, in the case of all these commodities, an equal infringement of private rights.

'We are of opinion that *six per cent. per annum* is not the highest value to which money rises in the course of business, any more than it is the limit of profits made by traffic in any other commodity. But, on the contrary, that whenever the use of money, in the regular course of business, produces a large amount of profit, the value of that use is proportionately increased; and that at such times, and at all others when money is scarce and the demand for it great, as well as in cases where the risk of lending is very much increased, the real value of monied capital is, and the market price ought to be, vastly more than six per cent., being always in the exact compound proportion of the demand and risk.

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Before we proceed to this inquiry, we cannot refuse ourselves the satisfaction of congratulating our readers upon the successful termination of the efforts which have been made by the friends of humanity, for several years past, in this Common-

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'We think that the law is wrong in imposing any restraint upon the absolute freedom of commercial transactions,—which, in order to be successful, must be left unfettered. In the case of money, which represents every other commodity, the evil is far greater than it could be in the case of any other article of traffic. We know that, in former ages, when the laws, by a mistaken policy, forbade the receiving of any interest, condemning it as morally wrong, commerce and the arts were almost completely destroyed; and that, as the opinion of mankind changed on this subject, and the laws became more liberal, commerce revived and extended its transactions, and scattered wider and wider its blessings. And we are firmly persuaded that neither this nor any other department of human industry will attain its perfection, until men of business are as unrestrained in buying and selling the media of exchange, as in buying and selling any other merchandise whatsoever.

'We are also of opinion, that while the present restrictions were intended to favor the interest of borrowers, they are even more injurious to borrowers than to lenders. But before demonstrating this proposition, we beg leave respectfully to express our conviction, that any attempt of the law to favor one particular class of citizens to the injury of any other class, is unjust, unconstitutional, and contrary to the spirit of freedom and equal rights; and although in this case the attempt is wholly unsuccessful, yet we cannot regard it, on that account, as less contrary to sound principles; and, both as borrowers and as lenders, we are equally hostile to the laws which sustain the attempt.

'We will now endeavor to show that, in their practical effect, these laws are injurious to borrowers of money. Whenever the demand for money is such in the market as to render it worth more than the established rate of interest, the borrower, however pressing his want, however strong his necessity, cannot raise the requisite loan; for the money owner is not compelled to part with his money at less than its worth; and he will not be so foolish as to lend, when he can find more profitable modes of investment; and the borrower, although willing to pay any premium for relief, must suffer all the pressure of his emergency without the possibility of obtaining assistance. Cases of this sort we have all experienced and observed very frequently; and we know them to form the most serious obstructions to successful enterprise. So also we are aware that many instances occur, in which the personal character of the borrower is such as to render the owner of money reluctant to venture on his credit, at the usual rate;—while, did the law allow, the applicant would be glad to pay a premium proportioned to the risk. In this manner borrowers experience a compound evil, being unable to pay for the desired article according to its market value or their own necessities; and many a man is ruined, who, if he could have been allowed to offer seven or eight, or more per

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wealth, upon a subject nearly connected with the one now before us. The almost unanimous adoption, by the last General Court, of the act abolishing *Imprisonment for Debt*, furnishes a signal proof that in this country no abuse, however

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cent., would have realized a fortune. Can any reason be assigned why the privilege of charging interest proportionate to the risk, allowed on bottomry loans, should not be extended to every other species of loan?

'The inconvenience experienced by money lenders, under the laws, though great, is yet less than that felt by borrowers, although these laws were intended for the borrowers' advantage. For, if the holders of money cannot lend at an interest equivalent to the value of the capital, they can invest that capital in those more profitable modes of traffic, which create the money demand. Thus to them only one avenue of business is closed, while to the borrower, *every resource* is cut off. But it is certainly worthy of legislative attention, that even in a single particular, the process of business is impeded; and legislators, as such, in our opinion, are to be held responsible for the losses that the community may suffer in the persons of its citizens, from this impediment.

'The law is manifestly wrong in supposing that, if left unrestricted, money lenders would acquire an overgrown influence, and exercise an oppressive power. Nothing of this sort can be reasonably feared, while we have such a host of banks, and other monied corporations, in addition to individual lenders, all in the market, and all engaged in active competition. No inconvenience of this kind is ever complained of in the case of bottomry loans, where the lenders are not restricted by any statute. No evil is found to exist in the matter of insurance premiums, where the risk is uniformly the measure of the rate. Competition, as much in the pecuniary facilities required by business men, as in the facilities of travel by land and sea, determines the price of those facilities. And is there not as much probability that the public will be burthened with exorbitant stage and steamboat fares, as with extortious charges for the use of money? We are firm in the opinion that all money transactions should be regulated, like those in other articles of trade, only by this spirit of competition; and that no greater evils would or could, in the present age, arise from the traffic in money being thus unrestricted, than are now felt from the perfect freedom allowed to traffic in other commodities. And it passes our understanding to see why that, whether money or goods, which is made the instrument of profit to him who uses it, should not, in all cases, be sold at its real value.

'The evils that grow out of our laws are enhanced by the fact, that the rate of interest in a neighboring State is one per cent. per annum higher than in Massachusetts. In consequence of this difference, by which a constant drain is produced from our market, a vast amount of capital, which, if they were fettered by no law, would remain in circulation amongst our fellow citizens, is drawn into the New York market, and totally lost to our borrowers, whose embarrassments are thereby increased. This evil is constantly and severely felt. But at

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sanctified by long usage and inveterate prejudice, and even though sustained by the supposed interest of certain very active classes of the community, can ultimately resist the current of enlightened public opinion. Among the circum-

particular times, as in the present pressure on the money market, its burden is especially heavy, and causes the greatest distress, particularly to those who are least able to sustain it, viz., business young men, whose capital is small, and of whom credit is the support. Were the present laws repealed, our own capital would remain in our own use, and the capital of the neighboring States would flow in upon us in such a manner that our business would be greatly extended and increased.

'We would respectfully direct the attention of the Legislature to the numerous modes that have been devised for evading the laws; modes of transacting business, which, besides being circuitous and inconvenient, and besides taking away the sanction and protection of the law from those who engage in them, leaving no security but what is termed *honor*, thus increasing the risk, and of course the premium paid,—besides these evils, which are loss of time, money, comfort and security, ---produce a fearful disregard of the laws, and establish a precedent of the utmost danger, while they tend to throw pecuniary negotiations into the hands of unprincipled and dangerous men. We need not specify the various methods by which the law is now evaded, and by which interest above six per cent. is taken, in defiance of law, under the various names of "premium," "exchange," and "commission;" for these are matters of notoriety, and need only be alluded to in order to secure the attention of the Legislature. So long as our laws remain unchanged, it is in vain to hope for a better state of things.

'Such being the opinion of your petitioners, they respectfully pray that the Usury Laws may be so modified, as to leave the rate of interest, like the rate of premiums on insurances, perfectly open to contract,---providing, however, that in all cases where interest accrues, and the particular rate has not been expressly agreed upon between the parties, the present shall remain the legal rate.

'And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

Wm. Tuckerman, G. Tuckerman, Joseph Balch, Joseph Blake, Charles Tappan, E. Bartlett, James Patten, Jabez Fisher, Job Tower, Bodwell Sargent, Wm. H. Delano, George W. Lewis, Enoch Train, Samuel Train, E. N. Train, Ezra C. Hutchins, Robert M. Morse, Joseph Breck, Pickens & Littlehale, Chamberlin & Kendrick, John A. M'Gaw, John Kendrick, Isaac Danforth, Silas Pierce, R. W. Bayley, J. A. Lowell, Levi Bartlett, John D. Bridge, Isaac Leonard, Prince Hawes, Jed'h Blanchard, M. Bolles, Jr., Butler & Coffin, Thomas Dana, William Frost, Stephen White, N. F. Cunningham & Co., E. A. Raymond, Wm. Fenno, L. T. Stoddard, Daniel Patterson, William Lincoln, Julius A. Palmer, Otis Norcross & Co., Nath. Hobart & Co., George B. Blake, Samuel Philbrick, Marshall P. Wilder, John M. Whidden, Charles Torrey, Wm. W. Stone, George H. Kuhn, William G. Lambert, Henry Willis, R. D. C. Merry, George Bond, Robert Ap-

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stances which tended most powerfully to bring about this signal triumph of the cause of humanity, may be mentioned the powerful and eloquent language in which the Governor,—pursuing the example of his eminent predecessor in the same

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pleton, James Blake, Jr., G. C. Perkins, Robert Farley, Wilder S. Thurston, J. S. Hastings, William T. Andrews, John L. Cabot, Richard Warren, S. R. Putnam, Silas Bullard, J. W. Harris, L. A. Cazenove, H. Rogers Kendall, Charles A. White, Charles J. Cazenove, S. G. Williams, Samuel Cabot, Henry P. Freeman, James Cushing, Eben. Chadwick, Arthur French, George W. Pratt, Hartshorn & Homer, Henry Gasset, N. Appleton, Robert Hugenon, Abraham Howard, Benj. Humphrey, Wm. Appleton, E. W. Robbins, William Reynolds, Ozias Goodwin, Samuel Swett, Benj. Seaver, Joel Thayer, Samuel Dorr, A. Townsend, B. Dana, Henry Edwards, Benj. Loring, Benj. P. Homer, Benj. Willis, Francis Coffin, Thomas B. Wales, Moses Grant, Joshua Chamberlin, William Jackson, Emerson, Lamb & Harvey, James Fullerton & Co., Otis Norcross & Co., George W. Torrey, Hastings, Marsh & Co., Emmons & Weld, Moses Williams, Viles & Atkins, Isaiah Atkins, Samuel Downer, Jr., R. Richards, Jr., Trott & Bumstead, Calvin Washburn, R. C. Hooper, D. Hammond, George H. Gray, G. J. Sprague, Crockett, Seaver & Co., Henry Cutter, C. F. Adams, Arthur Scholfield, Henry W. Russell, S. Whitwell, Jr., B. C. Harris, W. C. Stimpson, Samuel B. Doane, Daniel Noyes, Henry G. Rice, Gardner Brewer, Joseph Mariner, S. S. Lynde, Henry Dennie, Jer. Fitch, Isaac Davis, William Stearns, E. Copeland, Jr., James W. Gates & Co., George L. Stearns, John O. Fairfield, Jabez Fisher, 2d, Sumner Hudson, Charles J. Fowle, A. W. Grant, Eugene A. Homer, R. E. Little, Thomas P. Cushing, George W. Bond, Zeb. Cook, C. Wilkins, F. W. Dana, Wm. Eager, W. Farnsworth, E. Tucker Osborn, Wm. Fowle, Luther Parks, John Henshaw, William S. Wait, John W. Chickering, James T. Hobart, Amasa Walker, Newell Withington, Nath. R. Cobb, William Capen, M. T. Lincoln & Co., J. C. Converse, Michael Mellen & Co., George Denny, Wm. B. Swett, John Skinner, Henry Hall, E. A. Bourne, N. G. Snelling, John S. Wright, Parker H. Pierce, A. Weston, B. L. Thompson, Nath. Curtis, Alfred Richardson, Benj. V. French, Elijah Vose, Larkin Turner, E. Silsby, Stephen Glover, Wm. J. Loring.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

In Senate, March 19, 1834.

The Joint Select Committee, to whom was referred the petition of William Tuckerman and others, for a repeal of the Usury Laws, have considered the same, and respectfully REPORT;——That the petitioners, a large number of the most intelligent and respectable citizens of Boston, set forth in a concise, but distinct form, two principal reasons why the Usury Laws ought to be repealed. The first is, that they are,

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office,—denounced the absurdity and cruelty of the then existing system. Much credit is also due to Mr. Robinson of Marblehead, who introduced the bill in the House of Representatives, and Mr. Blake of Boston, who took the lead in

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in themselves, inexpedient and impolitic: the second, that they cannot be carried into effect, and by occasioning shifts and evasions of a more or less fraudulent character, create a great positive evil.

1. The value of money, like that of every other article, naturally regulates itself. If the rate of interest upon it, as fixed by law, coincide with the real market value, the law has no operation whatever. If, on the other hand, the rate of interest, as fixed by law, be lower than the real market value of money, then the effect of the law is to check the circulation of money, and thus impede and embarrass the natural course of trade. Thus, in the only case in which it can operate at all, the operation of the law is directly injurious.

2. Were it even admitted that Usury Laws are, in themselves, expedient and politic, experience shows that they cannot be carried into effect. The most general and pointed provisions that can be devised, are easily eluded by slight changes in the form of the transaction, and the law is accordingly, in practice, constantly evaded. But such evasions are, when strictly considered, of a fraudulent character, and tend to diminish the respect that ought to be entertained by the community for the laws under which they live.

Such are the principal reasons that are urged by the petitioners as motives for the repeal of the Usury Laws. The Committee have no hesitation in saying that they entirely concur in these views of the subject. They might easily be sustained by strong arguments, and names of the highest authority, but at this late period of the session the Committee have thought it inexpedient to submit a long report. It is believed that the general considerations connected with the question are familiar to the public mind, and would gain nothing in force by being recapitulated in detail upon the present occasion.

These considerations apply equally to every branch of this subject, and would lead to a total repeal of the Laws against Usury. Believing, however, that any sudden and extensive changes in the laws are generally inexpedient, the Committee have preferred to recommend, at present, a repeal of the Usury Laws only so far as they apply to Promissory Notes and Bills of Exchange, payable not less than —— months after date, and during the time for which they were originally made payable. The evils of the existing system are felt more strongly in reference to this class of contracts, than to any other, and it is therefore with them, that it appears expedient to begin the reform. The Committee accordingly report a Bill to that effect.

Which is respectfully submitted.

For the Committee,

A. H. EVERETT.

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support of it in the Senate, as well as to the indefatigable and truly meritorious Secretary of the Prison Discipline Society, Mr. Dwight, and the other distinguished citizens of all classes, who gave the weight of their names, and the sanction of their opinions in favor of the measure. Inconsiderable as may have been the effect of our own feeble efforts in producing the result, we can truly say that there is no part of our labors to which we now recur with higher satisfaction. We entertain no doubt, that the act abolishing Imprisonment for Debt in this Commonwealth,—although from its being unconnected with the party controversies of the day, it may excite less attention than some other proceedings of the State or General Governments,—will really exercise a more beneficial influence upon the well-being of the body of the people, than any legislative measure since the adoption of the Constitution. Although many very plausible considerations were urged in favor of the old system, it was in fact sustained by the mere force of *habit:* and this is also the only real support of the Usury Laws, the injurious operation of which is, in like manner, chiefly felt by the middling and poorer classes of the community. We indulge a confident hope, that a temperate but vigorous and persevering course of exertion on the part of the intelligent friends of improvement among us, will meet in due time with the same success, in regard to this abuse, which attended their efforts for the removal of the other. We are no friends of indiscriminate, wanton and violent changes

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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

In the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty-Four.

An Act concerning Usury.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this Act, all Acts and parts of Acts heretofore passed, which restrain or prohibit the taking of interest or discount at a higher rate than six per cent. per annum, be, and they hereby are repealed, so far as said Acts and parts of Acts apply to Bills of Exchange, or Promissory Notes, payable at any time not longer than months from the day of their date respectively, and during the time only for which they were originally made payable. *Provided however,* That the provisions of this Act shall not be construed to extend to any note of hand, the payment of which is secured by a mortgage of real estate, or to notes of hand payable on demand, or to bills of exchange payable at sight.

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in the laws:—we are free to say, on the contrary, that we consider an existing, and especially a long established system, as preferable, *ceteris paribus*, to any one that can be substituted for it: but when a law is notoriously and almost confessedly absurd, cruel and useless,—when nothing can be urged in favor of it but its antiquity,—we shall always be ready to concur, as far as our influence may extend, in removing it from the statute book. Such was the case with the late law authorizing Imprisonment for Debt, and such is substantially the case with the existing laws prohibiting usury, or in other words prohibiting the owner of capital, invested in money, from making the same use of it which he is allowed to make of it when invested in lands, houses, or any other article. We shall now proceed to lay before our readers a rapid historical sketch of the usages on this subject, in some of the most distinguished countries of ancient and modern times, and shall then briefly examine the actual operation of the laws now existing in this Commonwealth.

I. Amongst ancient nations, the Jews are the first to claim our attention. Until their departure from the land of Egypt, under Moses, they had never acted as a nation;—although for several hundred years they had preserved themselves an unmixed race in their state of bondage. Long before this time, money had been used as an agent of commerce; and the letting of money to hire was a perfectly familiar thing. Of course, we should expect to find mention made of this practice in the Mosaic law. Nor, on inspection, are we disappointed. The practice of taking interest for the loan of money, or any other commodity, is mentioned in the books of Exodus and Leviticus, wherein is recorded the revelation to Moses; and also in the book of Deuteronomy, in which are written the same commandments, as Moses communicated them to the people. The passage in Exodus (xxii. 25.) is in these words:—'If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.'

The passage in Leviticus (xxv. 35–37.) is as follows: 'And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him, though he may be a stranger or sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou *no usury* of him, or increase: but fear thy God: that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon

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usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase; I am the Lord your God.'

The passage in Deuteronomy (xiii. 19, 20.) is in these words:—'Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury, that the Lord thy God may bless thee.'

These laws having been once promulgated, bound the Jews to obedience, as firmly as we should be bound by a commandment addressed directly to us by the Almighty. It is apparent, however, that they did not condemn the practice *in the whole*, but only *in part;* that they allowed the taking of interest, but forbade the taking it by one Jew of another. Accordingly, that singular race never hesitated to lend or hire money upon interest, in their business transactions with foreign nations.

We wish to fix the attention of our readers, particularly, upon the distinction made by this law between interest amongst the Jews, and interest between them and other nations; for on a singular misinterpretation of the Mosaic rule, has been founded the most violent and long continued warfare, by religious men against all kinds of interest. It is only within a century or less, that the question has not been argued solely as a question of religion.

It is quite clear, that the intention of the Mosaic law was, not to declare the practice of taking interest an offence against the principles of morality,—but to make the Jews consider each other as members of one family,—all equally entitled to the use and enjoyment of the property of the nation. In other words, the law was not in its nature *moral*, but *political;* although when it was once enacted, its violation was morally wrong. It furnished an exemplification of a distinction made by our common law, between acts *mala in se*, wrong in themselves, or morally wrong, and *mala prohibita*, or acts wrong, because the law forbids them. Had the taking of interest been declared to be in itself an immoral act, the prohibition laid upon the Jews would extend to all mankind; but otherwise it cannot be considered of universal obligation, any more than is the Jewish celebration of the Passover. Neglecting this distinction, and disregarding the fact that the taking of interest

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is not censured except between Jew and Jew, the ancient Christian fathers considered the practice as an abomination in the sight of God. It was not only condemned in their writings, but denounced as sinful by many a solemn council of the church. The Canon law, or law of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, repeated the sentence of condemnation, and went so far as to declare those heretics who by argument defended it. We know not whether any person was ever led to the stake for taking interest or for defending the practice; but we think such a thing very probable; for we find the learned Doctor Willson recommending the punishment of this offence by death in the following terms: 'For my part, I will wish some *penall lawe of death* to be made against those usurers, as well as against theeves or murtherers, for that they deserve death much more than such men doe; for these usurers destroye and devour up not onlie whole families, but also whole countries, and bring all folke to beggary that have to doe with them.' History tells us, also, that the inquisitors were very industrious in enforcing the canon.

We shall again, and more particularly, examine the value of this doctrine of the church. At present we confine ourselves to history.

From Judea let us pass over to Greece. It is a glorious monument of the enlightened and commercial character of that country that she had no laws on the subject; that her trade in money, like the trade in every thing else, was left wholly without legal restriction. (*Boeck. Econ. of Athens.*) The law declared (*Potter's Antiq. c.* 26) that a banker should not demand or recover a higher rate than that fixed by the original contract between himself and the borrower. It also contained the following reasonable enactment, 'Let the interest on money be moderate.' But farther than this, it never interfered with the private rights of borrowers and lenders. One per cent. a month was the most common rate of interest; but on some species of loans a premium was charged, equal to sixty per cent. a year. Thus money lent on a voyage to the Euxine Sea, which generally required six months for its completion, was charged with an interest of thirty per cent.

While such was the liberal policy of the state, there existed, at various times, individuals who were as violently hostile to the taking of interest as were the Popish councils of the Middle Ages.

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Amongst these may be found Aristotle; a man whose name is illustrious in the departments of natural and moral science; but whose notions on politics are entitled to small respect. His reputation is dimmed by his enmity to commerce; and his works are, we must say, disgraced by the following passage. 'Of all modes of accumulation, the worst and most *unnatural* is interest. This is the utmost corruption of artificial degeneracy, standing in the same relation to commerce that commerce does to economy. By commerce money is *perverted* from the purpose of exchange to that of gain; still however, this gain is occasioned by the mutual transfer of different objects; but interest, by transferring merely the same object, from one hand to another, *generates* money from money; and the product thus generated is therefore called *offspring*, (τοκος), as being of precisely the same nature with that from which it proceeds.'

The worthy philosopher's indignation at the idea of offspring being produced by money, is not a little amusing. He had studied all the secrets of the natural world, animate and inanimate; he had been abundantly furnished, by the generosity of Alexander, with gold and silver coins, to an amount not less than $720,000; he had discovered, to a certainty, that these coins, though shut up together in his pocket and chest, never multiplied, nor gave any signs of fruitfulness; he had, moreover, found out,—perhaps by planting money, as the North American Indians did gunpowder,—that gold and silver would not *vegetate*, a whit more than they would *generate*,—and on the strength of this valuable knowledge, he denounced interest as unnatural and abominable.

This absurd reasoning of the Stagyrite was adopted by the logicians of after times, as sound and just; and by a singular fate, although in Greece it never gained any influence, yet in many other countries, and in ages long subsequent to his, it has set its stamp upon morals and legislation.

The same objection would lie against taking rent for houses, or hire for any other inanimate article of use; for neither do houses beget houses, nor did we ever hear of any other inanimate article of property vegetating or multiplying.

In the earliest ages of Rome, there were no laws on the subject of letting money; but the practice was perfectly well known there, and formed one of the most frequent subjects of popular complaint. In the celebrated secession

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of the lower classes of the people to the Mons Sacer, when for several days there was throughout the streets of the Eternal City the most painful expectation of impending civil war and fraternal bloodshed, the seditious multitude complained of nothing more strongly than the pressure of the exorbitant interest demanded of them by the wealthy citizens, of whom they were obliged to borrow.

In these early periods the common rate of interest seems to have been twelve per cent.;—or one per cent. a month. This is to be inferred from the fact, that six per cent. per annum is spoken of by the old writers as half interest, and three per cent. as one fourth interest.

Until the 299th year after the building of Rome, i. e. about 454 years before Christ, there was no such thing, in fact, as law, properly so called. The edicts of the kings, aided sometimes by the will of the Senate, and sometimes by that of the people, and made known by placards pasted up at the corners of the streets, hardly deserve the name of laws.*

In that year measures were commenced that soon resulted in the collection of the code of laws, which, under the name of the Twelve Tables, is celebrated in Roman history. They contained the elements of Roman Jurisprudence; were collected from the laws of Greece and other foreign countries; and, being written on tables of brass, became the statutes of the Republic.

One of these laws, according to Tacitus, fixed the rate of interest at one per cent. per annum. Some modern critics doubt the genuineness of the law quoted by Tacitus, and affirm that the first law, by which the rate of interest was fixed at Rome, was passed by the Tribunes, nearly a hundred years later. The question is unimportant; for either way the law has not much to boast of. If it be found in the Twelve Tables, so is another law, granting the creditors of an insolvent debtor

* The learned dispute with regard to the *Jus Civile Papirianum*, or collection of *leges regiae*, made by Papirius, about the time of the expulsion of Tarquin, need not be noticed here. Pomponius, Bynkershoeck, Heineccius and Niebuhr are arrayed on one side, while on the other appears a single name, which well nigh outweighs them all,—that of Gibbon. (*See* I *Kent's Comm. Sect.* xxiii.)

For twenty years after the expulsion of Tarquin, in the language of the Digest, the Romans were governed less by law than by uncertain custom and usage. 'Incerto magis jure et consuetudine, quam per latam legem.' (*Dig. s.* 2. 3.)

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the power of cutting his body into pieces; and another, giving parents the power of killing, or selling into slavery their children; and another, commanding the father to murder his child at its birth, if diseased and deformed.* If, on the other hand, the first law fixing the rate of interest was of a more recent date, it was passed by the influence of certain public officers, (the Tribunes,) whose greatest delight was, at all times, to oppose the regular operations of government, and stir up sedition among the people; and it was enacted after a long conflict between the higher and lower classes of the citizens, conducted with such fury, that not even the popularity of the great Camillus, by whom the Gauls had been driven from the Roman territory, armed, as he was, with dictatorial authority, and sustained by undoubted justice, was sufficient to stem its headlong impulse.

The early records of Rome are marked by numerous contests of this description, and by constant proofs of the popular odium belonging to money-lenders. Cato, in his Treatise on Agriculture, informs us that the taking of illegal interest was an offence punished with more severity than theft;—the usurer forfeiting fourfold,—the thief only double,—the amount of property taken. Next in order after the Twelve Tables, at an interval of eighty-five years, came the Licinian Law, which temporarily forbade all interest. Ten years later the rate was fixed at ½ per cent, and afterwards again abolished. The rate of interest was always highest at Rome, as everywhere else, when the laws on the subject were most severe; because of the increased risks, the diminished competition, and the aversion of honorable men to engage in any illegal trade.

Under the dictatorship of Sylla, towards the close of the Republic, the law fixed the rate of interest at 3 per cent; but we are informed that 12 was the customary and common rate. Cicero, at a still later period, speaks in his letters, of money hired in Rome at 34 per cent., and in the provinces at 48. This was a period of universal confusion, turmoil, and insecurity. At the death of Antony and Cleopatra, interest is said to have fallen to 4 per cent. At that time the genius of Octavius Cæsar had gained the last grand triumph over op-

* Fragments of the Twelve Tables, as collected by Fathers Catron and Rouillé.

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position, and the world lay prostrate at his feet;—peace being universally welcomed as a relief, though it placed upon the neck of subject nations the yoke of a tyrant. Horace, in his Satires, speaks of a person who lent money at 60 per cent. In the reign of Tiberius, whom the retributive pen of Tacitus has delineated for immortal detestation, Rome was again convulsed with a usury sedition. The celebrated Pandects and Code of Justinian, finally settled the law on this subject. By their provisions, in the language of Gibbon, 'persons of illustrious rank were confined to the moderate profit of four per cent.: six was pronounced to be the ordinary and legal standard of interest: eight was allowed for the convenience of manufacturers and merchants: twelve was granted to nautical insurance, which the wiser ancients had not attempted to define; but, except in this perilous adventure, exorbitant interest was severely restrained.'

Rome, in her turn, like all preceding empires, declined and fell; and upon the various hordes of Northern barbarians by which she was over-run, her civilization and laws for many centuries exerted but a feeble influence. We will not attempt to trace, through the darkness of those centuries, the course of custom and legislation respecting the loan of money, but will pass immediately to the most commercial nation of modern times,—England.

In the earliest periods of which we have authentic records of this land of our forefathers, we find that the Romish doctrine of the sinfulness of letting money to hire, had been universally spread over the island of Great Britain. It was the prevailing sentiment, that interest, or, as it was then called, usury, was an unholy gain, such as no good Christian could conscientiously receive.

Hence the common law, or, in other words, universal consent, placed the practice of taking interest amongst those crimes against public morals and convenience, the catalogue of which it would be difficult to complete. Whether it was prohibited amongst Jewish residents only, or the whole body of the people, is a vexed question with lawyers. It is however certain that the prohibition existed, and that its operation was such that the practice of lending money on interest was confined almost wholly to the Jews, who had in England, and in nearly every other European country, become

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the leaders of commerce, and the chief bankers. Money lenders have always been unpopular, even under the most favorable circumstances, and in the most enlightened and civilized ages. Of course, therefore, the Jews in England were most cordially hated, and, both on account of their religion, and their money, subjected to fiery persecutions.

The laws of king Alfred, about A.D. 900, ordained that the personal effects of money lenders should be forfeited to the King, their lands and inheritances to the lord under whom they were held, and that they should not be buried in consecrated ground.

By the laws of Edward the Confessor, passed about the year of our Lord 1050, the money lender forfeited all his substance, and was outlawed. Sir Robert Filmer, in a treatise published in 1678, erroneously states, that, with the exception of a clause in the Council of Calcluith, about the year 787, interest had not been prohibited in England, until the reign of Edward the Confessor, A.D. 1045:—and that this monarch, having been educated in France, and been 'seasoned with the principles of the kingdom,' banished money lenders from England. Alfred's law was of course earlier than Edward's.

Charlemagne, king of France, had in the 8th century prohibited the taking of interest, not only by the clergy, according to the seventeenth Canon of the Council of Nice, but by the laity; which prohibition was thenceforward supported by the whole ecclesiastical power.

Notwithstanding that such were the doctrines of the continental clergy, and although the laws of Edward partook of their spirit, we find the English clergy less illiberal. At a Council held in the year 1126 at Westminster, and at another twelve years later, the clergy alone were, by the decree of council, prohibited from the taking of money; degradation being the penalty for the offence.

In the reign of the second Henry, from A.D. 1154 to 1189, the estate of money lenders on their death was forfeited, and their heirs disinherited.

At the death of this king, and on the accession of his son Richard I., A.D. 1189, as we are told by the historian of England,* 'the prejudices of the age had made the lending of money on interest pass by the invidious name of usury; yet

* Hume, Chap. x.

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the necessity of the practice had still continued it, and the greater part of that kind of dealing fell every where into the hands of the Jews, who, being already infamous on account of their religion, had no honor to lose, and were apt to exercise a profession, odious in itself, by every kind of rigor, and even sometimes by rapine and extortion. The industry and frugality of this people had put them in possession of all the ready money, which the idleness and profusion, common to the English with other European nations, enabled them to lend at exorbitant and unequal interest.' The old historians of England, who were mostly monks, had censured Henry for his wise and equitable protection of the Jews; of course they exult in the cruelties inflicted upon them by Richard. 'The king had issued an edict, forbidding their appearance at his coronation; but some of them, bringing large presents from their nation, presumed, in confidence of that merit, to approach the hall in which he dined.' Being discovered and driven with insult from the palace, they fled. The people pursued them, and a rumor being immediately circulated that the king had given orders that all the Jews should be slain, such of them as appeared in public were slaughtered, while the houses of those who remained at home were broken open, plundered, and their inmates murdered, or else they were set on fire and made the funeral piles of men and women and children, without any emotion, on the part of the mob, of remorse or mercy.

'The disorder was not confined to London. Other cities followed the bloody example. In York, five hundred Jews, who had retired for safety to the castle, and found themselves unable to defend the place, murdered their own wives and children, threw the dead bodies over the walls upon the populace, and then, setting fire to the houses, perished in the flames.

'The neighboring gentry, who were all indebted to the Jews, ran to the Cathedral, where their bonds were kept, and made a solemn bonfire of the papers before the altar. A contemporary Roman Catholic author, after relating these horrible events, blesses the Almighty for thus delivering over this impious race to destruction.'

Under this same king Richard, a law was enacted, which required that every contract with a Jew should be made in writ-

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ing, one copy of which was to remain with the Jew, one with a magistrate, and a third with some good citizen. At this time money was sometimes procured at 10 per cent., but generally the rate was much higher. The common rate in Italy and other countries about this time was 20 per cent. The countess of Flanders, for the money raised to pay her husband's ransom, was obliged to pay enormous interest. The lowest rate was more than 20 per cent.,—and some of her creditors exacted 30.—*(Robertson's Charles V. Vol. 3. Note* xxx.*)* James 1st. of Arragon (1242) fixed the rate in that kingdom at 18 per cent.—*(Ib.)*

A curious document is presented in *Madox's Formulare Anglicanum,* bearing date the tenth and last year of the reign of Richard, in the nature of a mortgage of land for the security of a loan at 10 per cent. interest. Its words are, 'for which I, Richard of Sandford, will pay to him, the said Benedict Pernaz, interest at the rate of 10 marks per annum, for the aforesaid hundred marks.'

Under the succeeding reigns of John and Henry III., which extended to A.D. 1272, although the Jews were violently persecuted, they still remained in England, and still acted as money lenders. The rate of interest rose to an enormous height both in France and England. Instances occur in which fifty per cent. was paid; and there is an edict of Philip Augustus, the French king, limiting interest to 48 per cent.

The Jews, during this period, were subject to the most ruinous and despotic extortion by government; to ensure themselves against which, they were, of course, obliged to raise their rate of interest still higher. King John, whose grasping disposition and prodigal habits are so finely delineated in Sir Walter Scott's Ivanhoe, on one occasion demanded of a single Jew in Bristol, the sum of 10,000 marks, which was more than equal to a sixth part of the revenue of all England. When the Jew refused to pay that sum, John ordered one of his teeth to be drawn daily, until he should comply. The Jew endured the tearing out of seven, and then paid the unjust demand. Henry was equally unjust and unmerciful, adopting the most outrageous measures to fill his purse from the pockets of the Jews; and when his ingenuity failed, he turned them over to his brother, the Earl of Cornwall; in the language of an ancient author, 'that those whom one brother had flayed, the other might embowel.'

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In the year 1311, Philip IV. of France fixed the rate of interest allowed to be taken in the fairs of Champagne, at 20 per cent.—(*Ordon.* I. 484.) In Arragon it was somewhat lower.

In this same year, (1311) a Papal council, held at Vienna, renewed the anathemas of the Church upon the practice of taking interest, and passed that furious canon to which we have before alluded, that 'if any shall obstinately persist in the error of presuming to affirm that the taking of interest is not sin, we decree that he shall be punished as a heretic.'

This was under the administration of Pope Clement V., who had before rendered himself infamous by combining with Philip the Fair, of France, in the 'cruel butchery' of the Knights Templars, for the purpose of seizing to his own use their vast estates.

The taking of interest was an indictable offence under the reigns of the three Edwards, who succeeded Henry, and who held the crown of England from the year 1272 to the year 1377. But it seems that the common law courts were not then considered the proper tribunals, in which to punish this offence. The ecclesiastical courts, claiming jurisdiction of the crime as an offence against the Church, were deemed the proper judges. In compliance with the urgent request of the clergy, Edward III. sanctioned a statute making the practice penal. But he had in a manner been forced into this measure, and speedily procured its repeal. This statute betrays a very singular ignorance of the real character and influence of the practice of loaning upon interest; for it declares it to be 'the *Bane of Commerce.*' This ignorance of the Legislature will excite less wonder, when we learn that such was the prevailing ignorance of geography, that the English Ambassador at Rome hastened home in disgust on the Pope's making Lewis of Spain Prince of the Canary Isles, (then called Fortunate Islands,) firmly believing that they were the islands of Great Britain.

The burden of the law did not now, however, fall most heavily upon the Jews. They had been driven from all England by the tyranny of Edward I. in the early part of his reign; 15,000 of them being at one time robbed of their whole property, and banished. After that period, the lending of money passed into other hands, and the rate of interest rose in consequence.

During this period, about the year 1360, king John, of

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France, by his letters patent, permitted the Jews within his realm to take at least 86 per cent. per annum, on loans. But, as a specimen of royal honesty at that time, we may mention that in the following year he debased the coin, and obliged the lenders to receive it as of full value.

From a consideration of these facts, we may see the justice of a remark made by the celebrated Bentham, in his 'Defence of Usury;' 'Christians were too intent upon plaguing Jews, to listen to the suggestion of doing as Jews did, even though money were to be got by it. Indeed, the easier method, and a method pretty much in vogue, was, to let the Jews get the money any how they could, and then squeeze it out of them as it was wanted.'

Early in the reign of Henry VII., which began in the year 1485, a very severe statute was enacted, for the purpose of suppressing the taking of interest. The penalty of the offence was fixed at one hundred pounds, besides which the church was empowered to deal according to its will with the soul of the money lender. The same statute subjects him to a forfeiture of the principal, and disables the brokers from further business in their profession, besides subjecting them to a penalty of £20, and a half year's imprisonment.

By a statute passed eight years subsequently, the above penalties are somewhat mitigated. Certain rates of interest had been by law established in other European countries. As lately as 1490, the rate in Placentia, an Italian city of considerable commerce, was 40 per cent. Charles V. of Spain and Germany, had fixed the rate in the Low Countries at 12 per cent. Lewis, Count of Provence, had, in 1406, allowed the merchants of Marseilles to lend and borrow at 10 per cent.

Thus far we have seen that the laws of England regarded all interest on loans as criminal. In the succeeding reign we shall find a very decided change in the laws.

In the 37th year of the reign of Henry VIII., 1546, a statute was enacted declaring all rates of interest *above* 10 *per cent.*, to be usurious and unlawful; thus tacitly, though not declaratively, pronouncing ten per cent. and all inferior rates lawful. From this time forward, the laws have, with one brief exception, made a distinction between interest and usury.

Although this legal revolution was a great improvement, yet we cannot but wonder that it did not extend so far, as to leave money contracts perfectly unfettered by law. Our surprise

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will vanish, however, on looking over the records of Parliament during the reign of Henry, and there finding, that not only was a price fixed upon the use of money, but also upon poultry, cheese, butter, beef, pork, mutton, veal, and the labor of artisans. Beef and pork were ordered to be sold at a half-penny a pound, while mutton and veal were fixed a half-farthing higher. These wise statutes inform us that poor people alone ate the four kinds of meat last mentioned.

Henry VIII. was succeeded by a boy-king, Edward VI., by whom the old laws, condemning all rates of interest, were revived. This was done in consequence of his superstition. But the laws were rendered wholly ineffectual by the wants of the community, and the customary rate was about 14 per cent.

Edward's superstition was equalled by the bigotry of his sister and successor, Mary, whose name is a blot alike upon the history of her country and of her sex, and by whom, of course, as she was a firm Catholic, the laws against interest were still maintained in all their ancient severity. And yet, in the last year of her reign, she borrowed £20,000, at 12 per cent. interest, of the citizens of London, for the payment of which she pledged certain lands. (*Stowe's Chron.* 632.)

Under the next English sovereign, however, the illustrious Elizabeth, a more liberal spirit prevailed, and the commercial wants of her subjects were treated with greater respect. The statute of Henry VIII., legalizing interest at 10 per cent., was revived; and since that period, all that has been attempted by the laws has been the restraint of interest within certain limits, which limits have been gradually contracted by successive statutes from 10 per cent. to 8, in the reign of James 1st.; to 6 per cent. by the Rump Parliament, in 1654, whose action thereon was confirmed in the reign of Charles II.; and finally to 5 per cent. in the reign of queen Anne, whose statute remains in force to this day. In the quaint language of a writer of the last century, (speaking of the statute of Henry VIII.) 'the *good* folks, in the 5th and 6th of king Edward VI., repealed *this* law; but the *wiser* folks of the 13th year of Queen Elizabeth repealed *that* law.' (*And. Hist. of Commerce*, I. 375.)

Although the rate of interest in England during the days of Elizabeth was 10 per cent., it was then as low as 6½ per cent. in France, in consequence, unquestionably, of the superiority of the latter country over England in point of money capital; by the abundance of which commercial prosperity

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may in general be measured. When the rate in England has been reduced to 6 per cent., the following were the rates in other countries, according to an author, (Sir Josiah Child) who wrote in 1688:—In Scotland and Ireland 10 and 12 per cent.: in France 7: in Italy 3: in Turkey 20: in Spain 10 and 12.

The statute of Henry VIII., with the exception of the rate of interest therein limited, having remained, to the present time, the law of England, we will quote its general prohibition.—'No person, by way of corrupt bargain, loan, exchange, cherisance, shift, interest of any wares, merchandises, or other thing whatsoever, shall take, in lucre or gains, or for the forbearing, or giving day of payment, for a year, above the rate of 10 pounds per centum per annum.'

When this statute was revived by the statute of Elizabeth, a further clause was inserted, to this effect, 'that in the interpretation of the law it was to be most largely and strongly construed for the repressing of usury, and against all persons that should offend against the true meaning of that statute, by any way or device, directly or indirectly.'

In this careful language may be detected an acknowledgment of the fact, that money lenders had resorted to a great variety of expedients by which to evade the operation of law. It *had* been ever so. The lenders and brokers of old times and of old England, were as shrewd and crafty, and as well acquainted with the slippery tricks of evasion, as any of their descendants of our own times. Our readers will not infer, from this remark, that we are very violent enemies of such infractions of what we consider unjust laws. On the contrary, we are ready to say, in the language of Bentham, 'if this page suggest an expedient, and that a safe and commodious one, for evading the laws against usury, *it will not lie very heavy on our consciences.*'

The inference to be drawn from the language of the statute is just. There had been long kept up 'a running fight,' between the usurers and the Parliaments; and Parliament found, at last, that new modes of evasion sprung up more rapidly than they could legislate against old ones;—and, in despair of suppressing usury by a specification of all its possible forms, they took refuge in the general prohibition of exorbitant interest, '*either directly or indirectly, or by any shift, or by any deceitful way or means.*'

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We may perhaps, with advantage, point out some of the modes resorted to by lenders in England for the purpose of evading the law.

But first, for the benefit of the unlearned, we will mention that there are certain species of loan upon which the laws allow an indefinite rate of interest to be charged.

Among these may be named loans on *Bottomry* and *Respondentia*, or *maritime loans*,—where the money is borrowed with reference to a particular voyage, and is to be refunded only if the voyage be performed. The ship itself, or the cargo, is pledged for the principal and the interest, neither of which is to be paid if the vessel or cargo, as the case may be, be lost on the voyage contemplated in the loan. In these cases interest is, not unfrequently, charged as high as 30 or 50 per cent.

One evasive expedient of usurers was loaning on fictitious risks, so as to give to the transaction the appearance of bottomry, or some other legal contract; as for example, where the contingency in the bond was, that one, out of certain twenty ships from Newcastle to London, arrived in safety.

Another expedient, frequently used, was a pretended sale of goods:—the purchaser paying an exorbitant price for them, and then re-selling them to the lender at a less price, so as to give him the difference as interest.

Another usurious device was called *dry exchange*. If any of our readers have been obliged, during the last few months, to go on 'Change as borrowers, they may, in this same expedient, recognise the friend that helped them out of trouble. In this mode of lending, the borrower drew a fictitious bill of exchange on some person supposed to be abroad; the bill was never negotiated, but passed through the process of protesting, and was thus made to charge the borrower with exchange, re-exchange, and other incidentals, over and above legal interest.

A fourth plan was the lending of *stock* instead of *money*, on interest, at a nominal value higher than its market price.

The advance of money on a pretended partnership, and the receipt of interest as the profits of the concern, was still another device.

The same object was sometimes effected by the means of a lease on an enormous rent:—or by receiving a lease instead of

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interest;—or by the purchase of annuities at low prices of the annuitant, and so converting the dividends into interest; and by a thousand other methods, all of which, by their trouble and risk, rendered it necessary for the lender to raise still higher his rate, in order to insure himself; and all of which may be set down as the inevitable mischiefs of usury laws.

The ordinary rate of interest in Great-Britain is now less than five per cent., in consequence of the excess of monied capital above the calls for profitable investment. To this fact as a cause, we may ascribe the circumstance that many wealthy foreigners have purchased the stock of our National Bank, which yields a much higher interest.*

II. Having thus completed a brief history of usury and usury laws in the principal ancient states and in England, let us do the same by our own Commonwealth. Our Pilgrim forefathers, who in 1620 landed at Plymouth, and began the settlement of New England, were imbued with a deep veneration for all the rules and precepts of the Old Testament; which is apparent in their early laws. Thus, amongst their capital offences, were reckoned idolatry, blasphemy, witchcraft, and cursing or smiting one's father. We might expect, therefore, to find some provision against usury derived from the same source; and we find, accordingly, on examining their colonial statutes, that the very law of the Jews is there re-enacted.

The colonial government was in the hands of the whole body of freemen, who were church-members, until the year 1634. It was then deemed expedient, as the number of settlements had considerably increased, to elect a House of Representatives, who from that time forth became legislators. This legislative body adopted the Common Law of England as the basis of their jurisprudence; but, as Judge Story remarks, 'varying it from time to time by municipal regulations better adapted to their situation, or conforming more exactly to their stern notions of the absolute authority and universal obligation of the Mosaic Institutions.'

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* In France, interest was reduced in 1720 from 5 to 2 per cent.: in 1724 it was raised to 3½ per cent.: and in 1725 to 5 per cent.: in 1756 it was reduced to 4 per cent.: and afterwards raised again to 5. *Smith's Wealth of Nations. B. I. c. 9.*

In Bengal, money is frequently lent to the farmers at 40, 50, and 60 per cent.; the next crop being mortgaged for the payment. Twelve per cent. is said to be the common rate in China.

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By this Legislature, in 1641, in the seventh year of their organization, about twenty years from their landing at Plymouth, and in the reign of Charles I., was enacted the following statute:

'It is ordered, decreed, and by this court declared; that no man shall be adjudged for the mere forbearance of any debt, above eight pound in the hundred, for one year, and not above that rate proportionably, for all sums whatsoever, bills of exchange excepted; *neither shall this be a color or countenance to allow any usury amongst us, contrary to the Law of God.*'

This law was re-enacted in 1643. Its meaning appears to be that amongst church-members, (who were styled brethren) there should be no interest charged, although it might be taken of others. This is our interpretation of the law. We have never seen any contemporaneous exposition or application of it.

The rate of interest, thereby fixed, was the legal rate of England at that time, under the statute of James I.

The construction which we have put upon this law will appear the more probable, when we remember that no person could, at that time, hold any office or even vote, except he were a member of the church; and that, of course, the Legislature was composed wholly of communicants. The word *us*, in the last clause, we suppose refers to the people, as one great church.

Perhaps, however, the law intended to say that 8 per cent. interest was not contrary to the law of God,—but that all above this was. If so, it would have enlightened their posterity, had the Legislature of that day seen fit to inform us where they found the distinction made.

No penalty is provided for the violation of the statute, nor are we able to say whether delinquents were dealt with by Court or Church.

It is amusing to notice that next in order on the statute book, after the law respecting usury, comes a law regulating the value of wampum, as an article of currency. It is called 'an Act fixing the value of wampumpeag,' making it a lawful tender in all debts of a less amount than 40 shillings, and declaring that the white shells shall rate at half a farthing each, and the black at twice as much, if without spot or flaw.

This first usury law of Massachusetts remained in force until the year 1693, the 5th year of the reign of William and

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Mary, when a new statute was passed, commencing with the following preamble:

'Forasmuch as the abatement of interest hath always been found beneficial to the advancement of trade, and improvement of lands by good husbandry,—and whereas the taking of eight in the hundred for the interest of money, tends to the great discouragement of ingenuity and industry in the husbandry, trade, and commerce of this Province, Be it,' &c.

This second law fixes the rate of interest at six per cent., and imposes on every violation of the law the penalty of a forfeiture of the full value of the money or other commodity lent. It also excepts from its operation the maritime contracts before named, and certain customs of farmers with regard to the letting of cattle and other things. Its terms are as general and sweeping as those of the statute of Anne in England. But the preamble is its most remarkable feature, containing a strange mixture of truth and falsehood. It very justly declares a low rate of interest to be advantageous to both agriculture and commerce; but very erroneously attributes to the law a controlling power over this rate, and consequently over the prosperity of the community. The truth is, that law can no more regulate the value of the use of money, than it can regulate the price of labor or of provisions; and so far as general prosperity is affected by the terms on which money can be hired, it is beyond the reach of legislation.

In 1750, the twenty-third year of George II., an additional act was thought necessary to the full success of former laws. A new statute was therefore passed, making it lawful for the borrower to come into court, as a witness in his own case, and swear to the usury; and permitting the lender, also, to appear in his own behalf, and swear the other way. The old penalty was retained.

Such was the law until the year 1783. America had now become an independent nation, and Massachusetts had taken her place amongst the confederated republics. A new act of legislation on the subject of usury was deemed essential. But the old prohibition, mode of proof, and penalty, were retained; nothing was added except that the penalty might be recovered either by indictment, or by an action of the case: and with this alteration the law remained unchanged till 1825, when it was totally repealed.

The statutes of 1825 and 1826, which together are the ex-

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isting law of the land on the subject of usurious contracts, limit the rate of interest to six per cent. per annum. They provide that no contract shall be made void by reason of stipulating for a higher rate. They provide that, if in any action on a contract for the payment of money, it shall appear by the pleadings and on application of the defendant, that illegal interest has been directly or indirectly taken or reserved, the defendant shall recover full costs, and the plaintiff forfeit three times the whole amount of interest taken or reserved, and shall have judgment and execution for the balance only.

So also the borrower on such usurious contract may, in law or chancery, recover back three-fold the amount of the interest by him so paid. By these statutes the parties are allowed to be witnesses in their own behalf.

If any citizen of Massachusetts wishes to make his fortune, *according to law*, let him go into State Street and borrow money at 18 per cent., *a rate at which* $90,000 *has been recently borrowed in one sum;* let him take, say $20,000, for ten years. The interest on this sum will be $3,600 per annum. In ten years it will amount to $36,000. At the expiration of that time let him sue the lender, and he will recover back under the law $108,000, from which he may pay the original debt and retire to his *otium cum dignitate* with a clever property of $88,000, lawyers' fees always excepted.

Such is the dazzling bribe held out to the dishonest by our wise and conscientious Legislature. It rivals in merit the tooth-drawing edict of King John, already described.

We have now completed our historical survey of the subject of usury.

Our readers have perceived that, almost ever since the introduction of money, and in almost every prominent nation, there have existed usury laws: that wherever and whenever these laws have been the most severe, then and there have usurious practices most abounded and been most abused; that originally these laws have been based on the principle that all rates of interest are wrong; that, as men have become more enlightened and more commercial, that principle has been abandoned as absurd; that in later times the laws against usury have assumed as their basis, what is not true, that the law can regulate the value of the use of money, and of course that the fixing of a low legal rate of interest may be made the cause of national wealth and prosperity.

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From the facts thus laid open, the most eminent political economists of the last half century have deduced the principle, that legislation should no more interfere with money contracts than with contracts of any other description, but that the appearance of fraud and injustice therein should, as in all other cases, be within the reach of legal redress.

It is matter of surprise that Legislatures have not made and acted upon the same discovery. Perhaps in our Commonwealth the maxim, that 'great bodies move slowly,' may explain this phenomenon. Hoping to help onward in some small degree that progress of public sentiment which ultimately compels all legislatures into obedience, we shall now proceed to examine some of the various arguments by which the proposition, that the law ought not to interfere with the rate of interest on money lent, is supported.

III. The first question to be answered is, 'Whether the law ought to permit the giving or receiving of interest at any rate or in any case.'

This question may be said to depend on the morality or immorality of taking interest. No person is so ignorant of the principles of political economy as to doubt, that lending and borrowing on interest are of great practical convenience and utility. The dispute must turn, then, upon the question of morals. For if borrowing and lending on interest be immoral, no matter what may be the convenience or pecuniary benefit of these reciprocal sins, they should, of course, be strictly forbidden.

We pray our readers to bear constantly in mind the fact, that if either borrowing or lending on interest be morally wrong, both are wrong, and the one is as great a sin as the other. Such is the fact with relation to any act which requires the concurrence of several individuals. Thus the victim, who casts himself to be crushed beneath the ponderous wheels of the car of Juggernaut, is not less guilty of idolatry, than is the priest who guides the course of the murderous vehicle. The recollection of this principle may materially aid us in deciding the question at issue.

It may, at first sight, seem needless to argue this question of morals. But when it is recollected that far better, as well as far more numerous reasons can be adduced to prove that all interest is immoral, than to prove that the law ought to interfere with the rate: that until recently, the subject of

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usury, as before remarked, has been considered and debated as one of mere morals,—and that important conclusions for future application will be drawn from the manner in which this question may now be decided,—its discussion will not be considered unnecessary.

Let us inquire, then, whether it be morally wrong to pay or to receive interest.

The question, as we have already hinted, has been argued in the negative by Aristotle and other Greek, as well as Latin authors:—by the early Christian Fathers, amongst whom appear the names of Cyprian, Lactantius, Basil, Chrysostom, Gregory, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustin; by the decrees of Roman Catholic councils; by papal bulls; by the statutes of most European nations of the middle ages, and by 'a cloud of witnesses,' who, as writers on morals and politics, have lifted up their voices against the abominable practice of letting money to hire.

To the fallacious reasoning of the heathen philosopher, we have already replied. He was the declared enemy of commerce, and of course would denounce a practice which has ever been the main-spring of commercial prosperity. The argument by which he endeavors to show that the taking of interest is wrong, seems to be based on the name given to it by his countrymen. They called it '*τοκος*,'—offspring,—and the philosopher denounces this unnatural generation of money from money, as zealously as though he supposed the Greeks really imagined that interest was begotten of principal. It is unnecessary to spend time in replying to such arguments. The strange fact that this reasoning has, in modern days, found disciples, must be ascribed to that principle of human weakness, which induces us, in our admiration of the splendor of genius, to receive with respect even its errors.

Christian hostility to the practice of lending and borrowing on interest, originated in a misinterpretation of the Mosaic law. The passages on which the error was founded, have been quoted already at length. In the opinion of the Fathers, they contain an unqualified declaration that all interest is sinful, and a prohibition of that sin as obligatory upon us as it was upon the Jews: but it is difficult to conceive how they could have deduced such an opinion from such a text. Had Moses intended to declare interest sinful, he would not have allowed it to be taken of a stranger, or to be paid to a stranger. Un-

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less he meant to declare it sinful in itself, his command to the Jews has no application to any other people, but should be regarded as an exception from a general rule, applicable to the Israelites only, to whose character as a people we must look for the intention of the law. Unless we mean to assume the burden of the whole Mosaic dispensation, we must beware of taking any part thereof, except it be clearly intended for universal application.

A celebrated writer, in defending this doctrine of the Councils, finding it rather difficult to deal with the objection drawn from the discrimination which Moses makes between usury amongst the Jews, and usury between Jews and strangers, very ingeniously remarks that the Israelites were commanded to exterminate the Gentile nations of Judea, and that this permission to charge them usury was a part of the apparatus of destruction.

Unfortunately for the soundness of this argument, he does not explain in what manner the Gentiles were to suffer by lending on usury, even if they would be injured by borrowing. The intention of the law must have failed, in consequence of its not prohibiting the Jews from paying usury to their neighbors,—who were thus equally furnished with the engine of destruction.

The argument is rendered not merely null, but even ridiculous, by the light of modern intelligence. We now know that the practice in question, so far from being calculated to exterminate or injure either borrowers or lenders, is the very soul of commercial prosperity. We now feel that a conscience so tender as to condemn it, would, on principle, condemn every other business transaction, and drive mankind back again to the caves for a habitation, and for sustenance to their primitive diet on acorns.

The Mosaic law, therefore, furnishes no proof that it is morally wrong to let or hire money upon interest. But the enemies of this practice have drawn arguments from natural as well as revealed religion. We will now take some notice of the former, as they are summed up in the work of Monsieur Domat, a French civilian of the seventeenth century.

After declaring the taking of interest to be a sin most strongly condemned in the Scriptures, he thus proceeds ;—' If therefore we would discover what is the character of the iniquity which renders interest so criminal before God, and which ought

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to make it so to us, both in our hearts and minds, we have only to consider what the nature of this contract of loan is, in order to judge whether it be just to take interest for it or not: and we shall easily perceive, by the natural principles of the use which God has given to this contract in the society of men, that taking interest is a crime which violates these principles, and undermines the very foundations of the order of society.'

He then goes on to declare, as a general fundamental principle, that the very essence of a loan of any thing to be returned in kind, (as money,) is, that it be gratuitous and charitable: thus furnishing a singular example of what logicians call a *petitio principii*,—a taking for granted the very substance of the proposition in controversy.

If loans were indeed gratuitous, the only inference that could be drawn from this fact would seem to be,—that letting money to hire is not a loan; but if letting money to hire be a loan, then loans are not in their nature gratuitous. Either way, we see that the civilian's argument is unsatisfactory.

Having presented this elementary principle as the basis of his reasoning, he next arrays a company of arguments to prove the taking of interest to be a violation of the order of society.

The first is, that money lent, returnable in kind, is not exposed to insensible diminution, or wear and tear, and that therefore nothing should be paid for the use of it. Had he said that nothing should be paid for wear and tear, the proposition would have been true. But it no more proves that the borrower ought not to pay for the use of money, than the fact, that the lessee of a farm cannot use that farm like negotiable paper, proves that he ought to pay no rent.

The second argument against interest is, that if the borrower by accident lose the use of the money, he is still bound to pay the interest, as though he had used it.

The same objection would lie against paying house rent, in case the house be destroyed by fire, so that the use of it is lost. But the law very properly requires the borrower in the one case, and the tenant in the other, to provide against loss.

The third argument is, that if the borrower accidentally lose the principal, the lender nevertheless requires him to repay the sum borrowed, with interest according to the contract. Is this a hardship? So would the loss be a hardship to the lender, who perhaps is the least able to bear it. The law attributes gross negligence to a person who is so careless as to

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lose borrowed money; and in every instance of gross negligence, the faulty person is justly made the loser.

But the fourth argument is, of all, the most remarkable. It is this,—the borrower of money becomes, on its delivery to him, the owner thereof, with absolute right to dispose of it at his will, and ought not therefore to be obliged to pay for the use of that which is his own. This argument supposes interest to be paid for the identical piece of coin or slip of paper transferred by the lender to the borrower,—instead of for the value which the coin or paper represents. Of the external sign of the value the borrower becomes absolute master,—but of the value itself he is only the purchaser for a specified time.

The whole of these arguments against interest are founded on the false assumption already named,—that the essential character of a loan is charitable and gratuitous. When we remember that borrowing and lending are as purely business transactions as are buying and selling, or the letting to hire of land, houses, ships, or merchandise, we shall perceive the entire inapplicability of all arguments drawn from a contrary supposition.

The weakness of these arguments will farther appear from the fact, that they do not approach the real substantial reasons for paying and receiving interest. The enquiry may now be made, therefore, why should interest be paid? The answer is that A, by borrowing, has deprived B, perhaps greatly to his injury, of the power of employing such other profitable modes of investment, as he would otherwise have enjoyed;—because A has procured of B an instrument by means of which he can benefit himself, either by the payment of former debts, the purchase of desired articles, or any other investment;—because B has assumed the risks of never being paid, arising from the manner in which A shall employ the money, from his personal character and credit, and from every other circumstance by which the recovery of the loan is rendered doubtful or difficult;—and, finally, because he voluntarily undertook, after mature deliberation, with a full understanding of the contract, and on what he deemed ample consideration, to make such payment.

If these reasons be not sufficient to prove that nothing in the law of nature forbids either the payment or the receipt of interest, then is there no contract, whatsoever, amongst business men, which is consistent with the law of nature.

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We think it quite clear, therefore, that neither revelation nor natural religion pronounce, the taking or the giving of interest to be morally wrong. We now come to the second question:—ought the Legislature to interfere with the private rights of borrowers and lenders, and attempt to fix the rate of interest by any limitation?

To us it seems perfectly manifest that the laws should no more interfere with money contracts, than with contracts of any other kind. In the one, as in the other, provision should always be made against fraud; but the rules of the law should be of general, instead of specific application.

The laws ought not to interfere with the rate of interest, because *such an interference is an infringement of private rights, unwarranted by any circumstance of public benefit or convenience*, and therefore wholly at war with the spirit of our government.

It is a truth familiar to us all,—felt by us all,—that that government is the best, which, by the smallest machinery, and the simplest process, and the least infringement of individual liberty, effects the purpose for which government was intended, —the general welfare.

Guided by this proposition, and knowing that a part of our individual liberty is the liberty of making such contracts as we deem best for our own interest,—the liberty of managing our property in our own way,—we cannot but feel assured that unless the laws for the prevention of hiring and letting money, above or below certain rates, be called for by the public good, —be demanded for the purpose of preventing or removing great and general mischiefs,—they are, on principle, to be condemned as unnecessary, and therefore tyrannical.*

We proceed to inquire whether there be evils, and what those evils are, which demand for their cure or prevention the existence of usury laws.

One of the most illustrious of the English Political Economists of the last century, remarks in his work on the Wealth of Nations, 'that if the laws tolerated the giving and taking of

* 'The most effectual plan,' says Dr. Smith, 'for advancing a people to greatness, is to maintain that order of things which Nature pointed out; by allowing every man, as long as he observes the rules of justice, to pursue his interest in his own way, and to bring both his industry and his capital into the freest competition with those of his fellow citizens.'

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a rate of interest much above the lowest market rate, the greater part of the money lent would be lent to prodigals and projectors, who alone would give more than that rate.'

But is it true, that if money contracts were left unfettered by law, none but prodigals and imprudent speculators would borrow?

Go into State Street, and ask any money lending corporation or individual, whether, in case our usury laws were repealed, they would select the spendthrift and the visionary schemer as their best borrowing friends;—whether they would lend to the gamester in lotteries or at billiards, and to the dreamy trifler in hazardous experiments, instead of the discreet and sober merchant, whose modes of business and whose personal character give promise of prompt and honest payments. The answer, we presume, would be in the negative.

Nor can we justly fear that any class of borrowers, so long as they can offer the best security, will be subjected to exorbitant demands. Competition amongst lenders will always bring security and rates of interest to their proper level. No one will contend that money should be lent on bad credit and doubtful security, at a rate as low as that commanded by the best credit and the most unquestionable security.

That prodigals and projectors would ever monopolize the borrowing market, no one, who knows how few they are in any community, and how seldom they are found amongst us, can believe.

The supposition involved in Smith's argument is, therefore, false. Nor is that all. Were it true, the argument would nevertheless fail, inasmuch as the bare fact that the two classes of men therein named might become large borrowers, and be exposed to extortion, is no justification of the law. The law has no more right to prevent such persons from forming money contracts, than it has to prevent them from purchasing or selling every species of property at ruinous prices.

The laws may, and very properly do, provide for the appointment of guardians over those whose conduct shows them incapable of self-direction. They provide, with equal propriety, that the designing and fraudulent shall not be allowed to harm these helpless creatures in person or property. Beyond this they have no right to go,—and every step beyond is to be repelled as a trespass upon the sacred precincts of man's inalienable rights.

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It has been very truly remarked, that he must be poorly supplied with discretion, who cannot make his own bargains more judiciously than any legislature can make them for him.

We come to the conclusion, then, that neither the prevention of prodigality or imprudent speculation, nor the protection of folly, is a sufficient cause for legal interference with the rate of interest. It may be further remarked, that if the law can be justified in this interference, under pretext of protecting simplicity, it ought to go farther than it ever has done, and forbid the *lending* of money *under a certain rate* per cent.; for surely the simplicity of a money lender is as proper a subject of legislation, as the folly of a borrower; and we know not which, in a business point of view, would be deemed the greater simpleton,—he who lets money at six per cent. when it is really worth eighteen,—or he who borrows it at eighteen per cent. when it is worth only six.

It cannot be doubted that, if the usury laws were repealed, there would be occasional instances of fraud and extortion; but neither can it be doubted that there are such instances now.

It cannot be questioned that an occasional prodigal or simpleton, or other person in pressing want of money, would, in case there were no laws against usury, be obliged to pay a much higher rate of interest than is now the legal rate. But under the laws themselves, many an honest and prudent man is forced, nay more, is willing and anxious, to pay the same excess. Let it also be remembered that the laws of Massachusetts are not made for any one man, or class of men, nor even for a bare majority of citizens,—but for the whole population.

The second argument against usury laws is '*that, so far as concerns their declared intention, they are absolute nullities; in other words, that they are always evaded and violated.*

It is so now: it always has been so: and it always will be so, while such laws exist.

We have perceived that the practice of usury was always abused in exact proportion to the severity of the laws against it. When the laws amounted to prohibition, then interest was highest: as they relaxed in severity, it grew moderate in its rate. Thus in Greece, where there was no legal interference, money could be procured on the most hazardous voyages, at a rate far below that paid by the farmers of Cyprus on common loans in the days of Cicero. So now in Constantinople, where

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usury is wholly forbidden, the customary rate of interest on ordinary loans is 30 per cent.;—a price for which some of our offices would almost insure a voyage to the inner circle of the Maelstrom.

Let us now translate the lessons of experience and observation into common language, and we shall learn from them that borrowing and lending will exist in defiance of law, in every commercial community; that money will always command its full market value; that if the laws fix a rate much below the average market price, they will be subject to constant direct and indirect violation; and that, if the laws fix a rate differing but little from the average market price, they will be infringed only when the market price is above that rate; we have before seen that the market price of money, like that of all other things, is ever changing; from all which follows inevitably the conclusion, that the laws must always be subject to evasion and infraction.

From this inability of the laws to curb the course of business, arise certain consequences, the nature of which furnishes a *third* argument against usury laws;—to wit, that *they are a serious evil to both borrowers and lenders.*

Probably all of us have felt this fact;—perhaps some have misunderstood it: we shall endeavor so far as we can, to give an explanation of it.

The rate of interest at which any person can borrow, depends chiefly on the general relation at that time existing between the supply of money in the market and the demand for its use. It is also affected by the character and credit of the borrower,—the nature of the use to which the principal will be applied, if that can be known,—and a multitude of other circumstances, which vary the probability of repayment:—or in other words, by the security offered by the borrower, and by the circumstances attending the loan.

Interest is therefore of a mixed character;—it partakes of the nature of insurance as well as of rent.

When the market rate is highest, when it rises above the law's allowance, then is money invariably most wanted. At such times what is the effect of the law?

Ostensibly it wholly prevents both borrowing and lending. It says to the money-owner, who, of course, will not lend below the market rate, 'You shall not lend at all.' It says to the would-be borrower, whose prospect of profit, or whose fear

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of loss, prompts him to hire at the market value, 'No matter what are your wishes, no matter what your necessities, no matter how excellent your judgment, you shall not borrow above the legal rate. I know that you cannot get the money at that rate; I know that you could vastly increase your property, or escape destruction, by borrowing at almost any interest; but you had better by far stop business than procure your facilities at seven per cent.'

To the man of small capital, whose rich neighbors are borrowing with difficulty at full legal interest, but who is himself unable to offer the best security, and of course cannot borrow quite so low, the law exclaims, 'I pray you be easy; you must not think of over-bidding the law; you cannot borrow in these days; leave that to your wealthier neighbors, and wait patiently until money is worth less. They may be amassing still larger fortunes meanwhile, and you may be ruined,—but there is some comfort in being ruined according to law.'

Such are the principles of the law. A more odious monopoly than this,—a more hateful distinction in favor of the rich and against the poor, could not well be made.

Such are not, however, the *real effects* of the law, as a general rule; borrowers, at such times, laugh at the law and offer the highest price demanded for money. But instead of paying what would be its price were there no usury laws, they are obliged to pay, as an insurance against the laws, at least 33 per cent. above that price.

In the first place, the laws hold out a bribe to dishonest borrowers sufficiently large to tempt almost any man in his hour of weakness to resist the payment of the debt, and recover back from the lender that triple interest which the statutes impose upon him. Against this risk, created by legal operation, must the borrower insure the lender,—must the lender insure himself, by an enhanced rate of interest; on the same principle that the lender on Bottomry bonds increases his rate in the storm-season of the year, or on a perilous voyage.

A second way in which the laws are an injury to borrowers by advancing interest is, by diminishing the number of lenders, and consequently the amount of that competition by which prices are kept down. Many a man will refuse to lend at any rate, when the market price of money exceeds the legal per centage. Respecting the laws, even when manifestly wrong, they retire from the market. Thus is competition dimin-

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ished. By the same process the quantity of capital in the market is also reduced, and that which remains commands, of course, an increased price.

Besides these unfavorable circumstances, there is another. Many persons, refusing to lend above the legal rate, prefer to lend at that rate to such borrowers as can give the best security. Such men, therefore, become the creditors of banks and other monied corporations, which, having themselves no such scruples, do not hesitate to lend at the top of the market.

This diminution of capital and of competition, as we before said, elevates the price of money: for money lending is like stage driving,—the more the opposition the lower the fare: it is like every other kind of business, the smaller the quantity in the market while the demand continues, the higher is the price.

But the evils of the law are yet more extensive. Those men, who retire from the market rather than violate the law, are the very men with whom borrowers should prefer to deal. They are the most generous, the most conscientious, the most honorable. These who remain as lenders, are in general less generous, if not less honorable and conscientious. What is the consequence? Is it not a more rigid exaction of the highest price for money?—a more unyielding and unmerciful spirit of money making? This last evil effect of the laws would be less sensibly felt, were those who remain in the market as lenders, merely individuals,—were there no corporations standing in the capacity of lenders. But these corporations are by far the greatest lenders at such times.

Philosophy would teach us, even had the lessons of a bitter experience never been learned, that where a body of men associate together in order to act as an individual, that feeling of responsibility to conscience and to public opinion, by which every person is in some degree influenced, is almost wholly unfelt; being divided amongst so many it becomes insensible. The persons composing such corporations stand in the same relation to each other, with reference to a loss of honor, or of reputation, as do the members of a Mutual Insurance Company one towards another in reference to losses of property;—the fraction of loss belonging to each individual is so minute as to be scarcely felt. Such has been the conduct of these institutions, that public odium everywhere rests upon them. Their agency in times of pecuniary difficulty is never so generous

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and upright as that of individuals, and of course they considerably augment the burden of the usury laws.

In view of all these facts, can it be doubted that usury laws are an injury to borrowers? Could this be made the general opinion, those laws would speedily fall before the voice of public dislike; for borrowers form an immense majority in the community, and it is their mistaken trust in the beneficial effect of the laws which has so long preserved them.

The injuries inflicted upon lenders by legal operation, are equal in number and severity. They increase the risks upon which money is lent. It ought to be known and felt, that no part of what is charged upon the borrower in the nature of insurance is justly called profit. It is not profit: it is indemnity,—indemnity for the loss of security. That part of the rate of interest, which is properly called profit, is the small fraction which the lender would charge were the repayment of the sum lent positively certain. That this is very small, may be seen in the fact, that a very low rate of interest is charged on money lent upon the security of real estate,—and a still smaller rate on that lent upon government security. When money is worth more than the legal rate, the perils of lending hold a much larger proportion to the profit than on ordinary occasions. That this is an injury no one can doubt.

A *fourth* argument against these laws is, that *they are based on erroneous principles of political economy.*

The first of these principles is, that a low rate of interest is a sign of general wealth and prosperity. This may perhaps be true in old countries, like Holland, France and England, where every mode and form of human enterprise is occupied and crowded,—where wealth is vastly accumulated in the form of floating capital, and where there is always a supply of money vastly above the demand for profitable investment. Under such circumstances the rate of interest must be low,—and low in exact proportion to such excess of monied capital, or national wealth.

But, in this country, we have around us ten thousand untried paths of profit and modes of successful enterprise. Here there is not that vast surplus of capital, which tells of national old age; none of that aggregation of wealth in particular hands, which is justly regarded as the morbid secretion of political systems in decay. All is activity and freshness, and health and youth. We cannot find enough money to meet our de-

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mands for its profitable investment, and when the course of business is most successful, then does money command the highest rates of interest.

For hundreds of years to come it will be so. When, at last, our land, like England, shall groan under the burden of a crowded population,—when every acre shall be tilled,—when the sky shall be curtained with the smoke of our countless manufactories, and every one of our seas and lakes and rivers shall be vexed with our commerce;—when every device and expedient by which money can be gathered together, shall for a long succession of years have been discovered and employed,—and when wealth shall have far outgrown the demand for its employment,—then will this golden consummation be indicated by diminished rates of interest; but even then, we should be slow to consider these diminished rates as proofs of national prosperity. Till that time shall arrive, let it be remembered by every American legislator, that, as a general rule, with us public prosperity is at its highest pitch when money commands the highest price.

Even during the late crisis, when other causes of an extraordinary character lent their aid to raise the price of money, any merchant of Boston will probably be ready to say, that the first cause of the unusual rates of interest was a previous unexampled increase of profitable business, by which hundreds had been induced to extend their credits far beyond the bounds of prudence.

So much for the first principle of political economy assumed by our laws.

The second principle assumed by the law is, that the rate of interest, and consequently (on the European notion) the degree of public prosperity, can be fixed by the Legislature.

This idea carries upon the very face of it the impress of absurdity. It has already been shown that the price of money is determined, like the price of every thing else, by the relation existing between the demand and the supply. It is obvious that the law cannot affect either of these elements. They depend upon the vicissitudes of trade,—which, in turn, depend upon the operation of causes as numerous and as widely spread, as are the efforts of human enterprise and ingenuity. Every change of the breeze wafts to our ears the knowledge of facts which affect the market;—from every quarter of the globe, and from every kingdom of nature, and from every department

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of mortal toil, comes that information to our merchants and manufacturers, and farmers, by which their investments and expenditures are regulated. How vain, therefore, is every law which attempts to control that which is the effect of causes so various, so numerous, and so perfectly beyond the reach of legislation!

A *fifth* argument against Usury Laws is *their inconsistency.*

Are they intended to prevent prodigality? They tolerate it in every form but that of borrowing.

Are they intended to protect the simple? They allow him to lend his money at any rate, however low, and even to throw it away unrebuked.

Are they intended to shield the poor? They do not allow him to lend his money at its full value;—they drive him as a borrower from the market when money cannot be procured at the legal rate,—or else, by the perils of law, force him to pay enormous usury. All this we have proved. But this is not the inconsistency at present complained of. Besides this, *the laws allow an indefinite rate of interest to be charged and paid on certain sorts of loans, which cannot, in principle, be distinguished from loans on which the rate is by law limited to six per cent.*

Thus on Bottomry bonds the lender may charge what *he* pleases, and the borrower may pay what *he* chooses.

Is there any peculiarity in this kind of loan, or in the circumstances attending it, to justify the distinction made by the law?

Before investigating this question, our readers will allow us to remind them of two facts, the importance of which, in any discussion of the usury laws, is very considerable. The *first* is, that no person in business complains of the liberty given by law to this maritime contract; but on the contrary it is universally confessed to be just and proper. The *second* fact is, that, in the practice of lending and borrowing on Bottomry, although there is no legal restriction, no law of maritime usury, yet no evils arise from this freedom,—no abuses or extortious exactions are complained of;—all parties feel that they are even benefited by the absence of legislative interference. One would imagine that such facts might shake the belief of those who advocate usury laws.

Now let us see what entitles Bottomry to such legal exemption.

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Sir Wm. Blackstone says, that trade carried on by sea is of such value and importance, that it ought to be allowed perfect freedom of all such contracts as are needful to its existence or convenience. His remark is very true: but it is as true of business carried on by land:—it proves as much in relation to the common terra-firma contract of hiring and letting money, as it does with regard to maritime contracts. We confess that if, during a voyage, a ship's company are brought into want of money, and money cannot be hired at the common rate of interest, the captain ought to have the power and the right of borrowing at such other rate as he can. But so, also, do we affirm that if, in his ordinary business upon land, a merchant finds himself in want of money,—without which he must suffer,—he ought to have, and to exercise, the same right of borrowing at the best possible rate. Both captain and merchant are entitled to be the sole judges of their own respective wants and ability.

The law therefore makes a distinction where, in this particular respect at least, there is no difference.

But, says Mr. Ord, in his Treatise on Usury, Bottomry is not a *loan*, as other kinds of borrowing and lending are,—because the money lent is put at hazard; whereas in a loan the sum lent is not at risk. We do not insist on calling Bottomry a *loan*;—'A rose by any other name will smell as sweet:' but we do insist upon truth in the statement of facts. When it is affirmed that the sum lent is not, in the case of ordinary loans, put at risk, we must deny the assertion.

The money lent upon Bottomry is put at the hazard of sea perils,—of the winds and waves and rocks of the great highway of nations. In common loans it is put at the risk of every breath of fortune,—of every conceivable form of the many-shaped monster, *Danger*,—of every circumstance by which may be affected the inclination or ability of the borrower to fulfil his contract.

No such distinction can, therefore, be justly claimed in favor of Bottomry; but he who reasons justly and candidly must confess, that if in the one case exemption from legal restraint is called for by the necessity or nature of the contract, the same reasons demand an equal exemption for the other.

But we need not confine the illustration of legal inconsistency to a comparison between the different sorts of loans. Truth and justice sustain us in saying that there is not, in the

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whole circle of human affairs, any species of contract whatsoever, voluntarily formed by and between persons of sound mind, whether it be purchase or sale, or lease, or charter-party, or any other mode of traffic devised by human ingenuity, ever prompt to relieve its own necessities,—which the law, if consistent with itself, ought not to restrict by the same regulations which now encumber the letting to hire of money; and we need not fear to defy the most subtle intellect, to point out a solid reason for the invidious distinction which now exists. Time was when the legislature extended its interference with private rights to almost every act of private life. But that was a day of political darkness. The wisdom of the people has ever since been increasing; one after another of these legal abuses has been removed by more intelligent legislatures, until no relic remains of the old regime of error, excepting the laws against usury. A still farther reform will follow that increase of knowledge which is now enlightening the community, —and we trust that the time is not very distant when these will disappear.

Such are some of the arguments which seem to us to prove that usury laws ought not to exist. It would be easy to multiply them,—but we trust that we have said enough to satisfy any reasonable man of the truth of the proposition which we have endeavored to prove. We have seen that usury laws are needless infringements of individual liberty, called for by no public necessity and producing no beneficial effect. We have seen that they are a dead letter, always violated and evaded. We have seen that they are productive of enormous evils to both borrowers and lenders, the largest share of the evils being inflicted on those who borrow. We have seen that they are founded upon false notions of political economy; and finally that they are inconsistent in principle, and partial in their operation. In view of all these arguments, and remembering that in strict justice it is incumbent upon the advocates of such laws to prove their claims upon our favorable regard, we feel ourselves authorized to conclude that they ought to be abolished.

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ART. V.—*The Free Cities of Flanders.*

1. *Histoire des Ducs de Bourgogne de la Maison de Valois.* Par M. de BARANTE. 11 tom. 8vo. Paris. 1825.
2. *Histoire de la Flandre depuis le Comte Gui de Dampierre jusqu' aux Ducs de Bourgogne.* Par JULES VAN PRAET. 2 tom. 8vo. Bruxelles. 1828.
3. *Notice Historique sur la Ville de Gand.* Par A. VOISIN. 12mo. Gand. 1826.

THE history of a community, which has run its career of public freedom, is fraught with peculiar interest to those of later times, who are still engaged in trying a similar great experiment on the capacity of man for self-government. Its example addresses instruction and admonition to them, equally as to the rest of the world. And they can enter, with all the sympathy of perfect fellow-feeling, into the triumphs which honored, or the reverses and errors which saddened, the sojourn of liberty in the bosom of a people which has now ceased to be free. The commonwealths of Greece and Rome, by reason of their long-continued power and classic celebrity,—the Italian republics of the middle age, by their conspicuous position in the very front of modern European refinement,—have attracted, as they ought, the larger share of study and admiration. There is another class of communities, in many respects resembling those of Greece and Italy, which, with less of external splendor to fix regard, are yet entitled to a careful examination on the part of us, the immediate descendants of the northern nations of Europe,—namely, the great cities of England, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and the Baltic. Whilst, in the rural districts of these countries, the feudal system struck deep root, and the great baronial aristocracy were exclusively possessed of power,—in the large cities, on the contrary, with their dense population, there was a spirit of liberty at work from the beginning; and out of them issued forth the power and influence of the *commons*, and *tiers-état*, to change the face of all Europe.

We propose, in illustration of this important subject, after saying a few words on the political organization of the communities in question, to run over the leading incidents in the history of one of them, Ghent, the chief among the Flemish free

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cities, and for a while the turning point in the politics of Western Europe.

Rome, it is familiarly known, was in the outset a mere municipality, not a nation, in the sense which this word bears at the present day. The population of Greece and Italy was in the old time distributed in cities, not in states; and the government of Rome, like that of Athens, was a civic, not a national organization. As the conquests of Rome proceeded, she made war upon cities, she contracted alliances with cities, she established colonies in the form of cities; and when the power of the Republic was at length supreme, it consisted of a great multitude of municipalities stripped of their proper independence, that is, of the powers of sovereignty, of the right of peace and war, but in every other particular retaining a civic constitution analogous to that of Rome. When the Roman Empire fell into pieces, the great cities composing it naturally and readily resumed the sovereignty which they had anciently possessed, or took it upon them for the first time in the mere exercise of the duty of self-defence. In Italy, where the municipal organization was more firmly established than in Gaul or Britain, and where the Barbarians were less entirely victorious, the cities speedily rose again to opulence and power. But the Franks, Saxons, and Goths, who gained the western provinces of the Empire, were more successful in the work of destruction than the Lombards and other invaders of Italy. Hence, the municipal organization, which balanced the feudal system in Italy, became quite subordinate to it in the dominions of the Franks and Saxons. In Modern Italy, the feudal nobility left their mountain fastnesses and isolated strongholds, to enter into the great cities as citizens, not as masters; and they severally gained the control of Milan, Florence, and so forth, by usurpation, not by conquest. But in the north of France and in the Netherlands, the cities were compelled to enter unreservedly into the system of feudality, and wear the yoke of the great barons, upon whom the soil, and with it the rights of sovereignty, devolved. In process of time, as the inhabitants of the cities acquired riches, strength, and a sense of the oppression of their feudal superiors, they began to take up arms against the barons on whom they depended, and extorted from the latter various concessions in charters of immunity, which constitute the legal origin of popular rights in modern Europe.

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Bearing in mind these preliminary remarks, let us now approach to an individual case, to witness the development of the germ of liberty under the auspices of civic intelligence and patriotism, and trace the vicissitudes of a long contest between feudal power and popular right;—for doing which, the works at the head of this article supply us with abundant materials of the highest authority.

It is one of the foibles of antiquaries to carry back the origin of states and cities to a far distant period, and to find some splendid name in the obscurity of traditionary lore as the imaginary founder of communities, which probably owed their beginnings to the chance association of humble individuals. Hercules is the putative father of many a city along the shores of the Mediterranean. Æneas proved a ready resource for less presuming fabulists. The conquests of Julius Cæsar in Gaul and Britain have rendered it convenient for the chroniclers of the middle ages to ascribe to him the honor of numerous establishments, which rose to rank in modern times. Ghent, among the rest, has her legend on this subject, which supposes that the name she originally bore was Gaia or Caia, after the prenomen of the Dictator. Another tradition traces the foundation of the city to the Vandals, who, it is thought, gave it the name of Vanda, which afterwards became corrupted into Ganda, the Latin name equivalent to Ghent. Each of these theories has more of fancy than of fact in its composition.

Ghent does not make its appearance in history until the seventh century, when Dagobert despatched Saint Amand thither to convert the Pagan inhabitants to Christianity. It seems to have struggled along in common with the other towns under the sway of the Merovingian Franks, amid the barbarism of those times, without being the scene of any remarkable occurrence, until the ninth century, the disastrous epoch of the incursions of the Normans. Ghent was too near to the sea-coast not to suffer greatly from the merciless inroads of those licentious pirates, who were so long the scourge and terror of Western Europe. In 811 we find Charlemagne constructing a fleet of boats at Ghent for the purpose of opposing the Normans. In 868 Baldwin, first Count of Flanders, surnamed Bras-de-Fer, or Iron-Arm, a quality that seems to have been very desirable in that age, raised fortifications professedly to protect Ghent from the same robbers, which fortifications afterwards became the means of overawing the citizens themselves.

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They began, about this time, to exhibit wealth and numbers, and in the year 960 gave the first signal example of the spirit of independence, for which they subsequently became remarkable. The story is, that Ghent was besieged in that year by the Kings of France, England, and Scotland, who made a vow that if the city were not speedily surrendered, they would raze it to its foundations and sow the ruins with corn. Nothing daunted by the menace, the inhabitants made so brave a defence that the siege was abandoned by their enemies, the King of England being permitted to enter the city and scatter a handful of grain in the market place, to comply with his rash vow.

Indeed, the characteristic traits of courage, industry, enterprise, and love of liberty, which so long distinguished the people of Ghent, had ere now become fully developed. Europe was recovering slowly from the terrible ravages of the Normans, and the patient Flemings being among the first to avail themselves of returning tranquillity, Count Baldwin the younger introduced the manufacture of cloths at Ghent. The inhabitants devoted themselves successfully to agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, chiefly of woollen goods, for which the raw material was obtained in England. Under these circumstances, notwithstanding the occurrence of the customary calamities of the middle ages, namely, occasional pestilence and conflagration, and continual war, Ghent had acquired great comparative prosperity towards the close of the twelfth century, when the mania of the Crusades seized on the nobles and proved so useful to the humbler *bourgeois*, peasantry, and serfs, who were enabled to purchase numerous privileges from the necessities of their feudal lords.

The inhabitants of Ghent profited largely by the circumstances of the time, which gave dignity and strength to the municipalities of the Low Countries. Under Philip of Alsace, in the year 1178, they were released from all the incidents of villenage, gained territorial rights, the privilege of assembling to deliberate on their public affairs, of being governed by *échevins*, or municipal magistrates, elected by themselves, and of possessing a public seal, a *beffroi* or watch tower, and judicial authority. At this period, many of the citizens of Ghent had accumulated riches, and they began to build those fortified dwellings, flanked with turrets, which are still seen in some parts of the city. They obtained, at the same time,

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numerous privileges for their trade and manufactures, which stimulated the natural proneness of the inhabitants of the Netherlands for cultivating the useful arts. Their commerce was greatly extended by the institution of the Hanseatic League. From the Emperor Frederic they received a concession of the free navigation of the Rhine. In the year 1191, Ghent was made the capital of Flanders. Soon afterwards Baldwin of Hainault, the successor of Philip, granted them many additional immunities, such as that no edict of the Count should have the force of law without being confirmed by the citizens, and that they might construct fortifications for the protection of the city or of individuals. The next Count, Baldwin IX., who became Emperor of Constantinople at the time of the Crusades, also liberally encouraged the industry of Ghent.

Under Ferrand and Jeanne, in the year 1228, the *thirty-nine* were established as the depositaries of the municipal powers, a body which afterwards became famous in the Flemish annals. Many cessions of land were also made to the city during the thirteenth century; and by its gradual but rapid increase of territory, wealth and inhabitants, it had now become more extensive and populous than the capital of France. It was visited by Petrarch at this period, who spoke with admiration of the industrious population, which he found superior to any he had seen since his departure from Italy. And it was not long before Ghent, having prospered so wonderfully under the judicious policy of its Counts, who easily saw that they could in no way derive so much revenue from its inhabitants as by fostering their enterprise and industry, rose to possess political importance, and to be capable of exercising a marked influence in the affairs of Europe.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Gui de Dampierre, Count of Flanders, was holden prisoner in France, while Charles de Valois took possession of Ghent in the name of Philippe le Bel. This prince suppressed the *thirty-nine*, and substituted a different body for the government of the city, which was placed in charge of one of his favorites called Jacques de Chatillon. The Flemings rose in arms in behalf of their native sovereign, and encountering a numerous army under Robert of Artois, at Courtrai, in the year 1302, gained the splendid victory of Courtrai, in which the flower of the French nobility fell before the brave burghers of Bruges and Ghent. On this memorable day, 8000 gilt spurs adorned the

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triumph of the Flemings, from which circumstance this engagement was called the Battle of the Spurs; and the result was the re-establishment of Gui de Dampierre in his authority. This was among the earliest occasions, in which the inhabitants of Ghent distinguished themselves in the great contests of that age; but others followed in quick succession, in consequence of the troubles which broke out in Flanders under Count Louis de Crécy.

The people of Ghent supported their Count against the revolted inhabitants of Bruges on various occasions, and finally at the battle of Cassel in the year 1328, which proved so fatal to the insurgent Flemings. But afterwards the intrigues of Edward III., of England, who threatened to deprive them of the supply of wool so indispensably necessary to the subsistence of their manufactures, induced them to take part against Count Louis. They made choice of the famous James van Artevelde, a man of distinguished birth as well as talents, to be *Ruwaert* or Protector of Ghent. His relative Siger of Courtrai had been executed in the year 1337, for opposition to Count Louis; but this example did not deter Artevelde from entering on the same career of patriotism, in defence of the rights of his fellow citizens, against the authority and influence of France. In the year 1338, he led the people of Ghent against Bruges, Ypres, and other towns, and conquered the whole of Flanders. At the seige of Tournai in the year 1340, he commanded the Flemish contingent of 40,000 men in the army of the Allies, leagued against Philippe de Valois. The truce that ensued did not deprive him of his authority, which was in a manner absolute throughout Flanders. To evade the sentence of excommunication pronounced against the people of Ghent at this time, on account of their being false to the oath of allegiance to the king of France, which they had previously taken, Artevelde suggested that they should acknowledge Edward III., as king of France, so as to reconcile their friendship for him with their oaths. He introduced into Ghent a classification of the inhabitants, in imitation of the internal system of Florence, and thus organized the brave artisans so that their masses could be called into action at a moment's warning. He divided the people into three classes, one consisting of the proprietors and capitalists, another of the weavers, and a third of fifty-two other trades of the city, each class having its dean, who possessed considerable executive power,

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Artevelde enrolled himself in the company of brewers, in order to rank with the common people, and was chosen their dean. These arrangements, which continued in force through all Flanders until the middle of the sixteenth century, gave new energy to the inhabitants of Ghent, and enabled Artevelde to apply their forces promptly to the accomplishment of any public object. He consulted the wishes of the clergy, who repeatedly supplied him with money for the expenses of government, was beloved by the merchants, because he rendered commerce flourishing, and respected by the army, which he had so often conducted to victory. In fact, for seven years this extraordinary man maintained his authority in Ghent, raising the city to the highest pitch of prosperity, until he was basely assassinated, in the year 1344, by some of the partisans of Count Louis.

Van Artevelde had attained a degree of authority and influence which no Count of Flanders ever possessed, and attained it by the simple force of superior talents. Eminently endued with skill as an orator, he knew how to move at will the unstable multitude, whom it was his fortune to rule. Having travelled and frequented courts, he exhibited the nobleness and native dignity of one born to wear a coronet. Simple and popular in his intercourse with his fellow-citizens, he displayed, among men of higher standing, the penetrating genius and varied intelligence of the profound statesman, and succeeded, with all, in communicating to his enterprises the air of being intended to effect some plausible object of public good. The nobles and princes, those lawgivers and rulers by the right of birth, whom he displaced for a time, did not, of course, bear any affection to his memory; but the inquisitive and free searching erudition of modern times is more just to the reputation of a man, whom no hereditary sovereign of his country ever surpassed, and who governed by the right of popular election, which the world now seems resolved to think as valid a title to political power as primogeniture.

The struggle of that period, although on the face of it a dispute of rival foreign factions, that is, the French and the English, was in fact between the conflicting pretensions of growing independence among the people and the spirit of feudalism resisting their efforts to be partially free. It is, therefore, a cause, in which every well wisher of the human family should sympathize. Notwithstanding the untimely death of Artevelde,

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his party was then completely successful. The people of Ghent bore arms under King Edward before Calais, and compelled the French and their young Count, Louis de Mâle, to acknowledge and confirm their ancient privileges, and especially to release them from all obligation to give aid in the wars of France against England.

For many years after this epoch, Ghent participated largely in the extraordinary prosperity of Flanders, which flourished remarkably amid the barbarism of the rest of Northern Europe. But Louis de Mâle could not forget the humiliation, which he had sustained at the hands of the bold and free-hearted burghers of Ghent. Since his admission to the inheritance of his ancestors, they had repeatedly contributed enormous sums of money to pay off his debts, and at length became weary of continually feeding his extravagance and profusion. He obtained what he wanted by applying to the people of Bruges, whom he recompensed for their compliance, by giving them permission to construct a canal for conducting the waters of the Lys directly from Deynse to Bruges. Incensed at the prosecution of a plan, the effect, and perhaps the design of which they saw was to prejudice their own commerce, the people of Ghent flew to arms, and under the command of the dean of the boatmen, named Yoens, they dispersed the laborers on the new canal, and lighted up again the flames of war in Flanders.

Louis de Mâle was nothing loath to have an opportunity of trying conclusions once more with his turbulent subjects. The insurgent party bore the *nom de guerre* of the White-caps. Their leader, Yoens, was brave and unscrupulous, possessed of a popular eloquence and an enterprising spirit, which gave him great influence among his countrymen. Count Louis despatched his steward with a party of two hundred horsemen, to secure the person of Yoens; but the White-caps fell upon them, slew the steward, tore in pieces the banner of the prince, and ravaged the houses of his adherents. Matters had now gone too far for peace, and the White-caps assembled to the number of 10,000, and proceeded to sack and burn the rich castle of Woldeghem, belonging to Louis, which he had constructed and adorned at vast expense. They then marched against Alost, Terminde, Ninove, and Deynse, which submitted to their authority, and made common cause with them in defence of the common liberties of Flanders. On his return from these ex-

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peditions, Yoens died very suddenly, not without suspicion of being poisoned, and the burghers of Ghent elected four captains to command them, among whom Pieter van den Bossche was the most prominent. These leaders continued the war for a while with various fortune; but they soon found that the spirit of the people began to flag, and that a man of more popular talents was needed to infuse energy into the ranks of the insurgents. Van den Bossche had his eye upon the person demanded by the exigencies of the occasion, and was sufficiently disinterested to be willing to descend from his present elevation, and act a secondary part, when the good of his country required the sacrifice at his hands.

During the preceding year, a census had been taken of the male inhabitants of Ghent between fifteen and sixty years of age and capable of bearing arms, which many historians state at the large number of 80,000 men. Their prosperity in commerce and the arts had introduced luxury and license in its train. The operative classes could earn a subsistence by the labor of two or three days in the week, and had ample leisure for the gratification of disorderly propensities. Now, when they were pressed by the troops of Count Louis, they recalled the days of Van Artevelde, to whom they ascribed so much of their flourishing condition, and whose brilliant abilities and popular principles they recollected with veneration and profound regret. Would that James van Artevelde still lived! was the daily cry in Ghent. He did live, unnoticed and almost unknown, in the person of his son, Philip van Artevelde, the god-son of Queen Philippa of England, who, although in obscurity, and yet untouched by the impulse of ambition, was the heir of all the talents of the celebrated brewer of Ghent, the companion of kings, and the champion of his country. Followed by the principal burghers of the city, Van den Bossche repaired to the house of Van Artevelde, and invited him to assume the rank of his father. Philip yielded to the call of his country or of ambition, and was conducted to the Marché au Vendredi, where he received the oath of fidelity on the part of the people, and swore in his turn to maintain their rights and immunities inviolate. (February 1381.)

One of the first acts of his administration was a tribute of justice to the memory of his father and to the majesty of the laws violated in his person, which gave an earnest of the energy of his own character and purposes. He caused twelve of

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the individuals concerned in the assassination of James van Artevelde to be punished with death. A military code, promulgated by him soon afterwards, one provision of which was that every man who left the fight without a wound should be imprisoned on bread and water forty days, was equally indicative of the resolute spirit of the new dictator. The time soon came for testing the strength of his party in the field of battle. A few months after the elevation of Van Artevelde to power, Louis de Mâle laid siege to Ghent, and encamped at Heusden with an imposing army. He was beaten in the battle of Gentbrugge; and his cousin and favorite, Gaultier d'Enghien, being slain by means of an ambuscade, he was compelled to break up his camp.

Van Artevelde, conceiving this to be a favorable occasion for treating with Louis, and bringing about his restoration to power on equitable conditions, sent twelve senators to Harlebeke to propose an accommodation. But the Count would agree to no treaty, without a stipulation that he might select two hundred of the inhabitants, and shut them up in the prisons of Lille. It was easy to see that Van Artevelde and his friends, the steady friends of the people, would be swept off by virtue of this clause, and besides losing their own lives, would leave the Flemings exposed to new exactions, with no bold hearts remaining to resist the Count's usurpations. To break up such an arrangement, Van Artevelde and his confidant, Van den Bossche, adopted an expedient, whose boldness was its only recommendation. When Simon Bette and Gilbert de Grutere, the chiefs of the embassy, who had thus betrayed the interests of the city, had made their report to the people, Van den Bossche stepped up to Gilbert de Grutere, and struck his dagger to his heart, while Van Artevelde did the same to Simon Bette. Another fierce struggle with Louis was the necessary consequence of this summary act of vengeance.

Meanwhile the movements of Louis had reduced the people of Ghent to a state of extreme want and misery. He persisted in reserving the right to punish capitally, at discretion, and in requiring that all the burghers should march out to meet him with cords around their necks, and kneel before him in humble petition for mercy. Van Artevelde proposed these degrading terms to the famished people, and finding them resolved to attempt any desperate enterprise rather than submit to such

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humiliation, determined to march against Bruges, which had declared for Louis, and where the prince was then quartered. Having arranged his plans, and made a distribution of all the food remaining in the city, he marched forth at the head of 5000 picked men, with 300 pieces of artillery placed in cars, and took a position about a league from Bruges, where, entrenched behind his cars, he awaited the coming up of Count Louis.

Van Artevelde's forces were enfeebled by hunger, but they were brave and well armed, and they were steeled against all fear of consequences by the utter hopelessness of their present situation. They must die of starvation as it was, and they could but die at worst, if they did their duty in the field, and were unsuccessful; if they conquered, the boon they gained would be incalculably great. Mass was celebrated on the spot by a party of priests who had followed to bless the enterprise, and more than three quarters of the soldiers partook of the communion as doomed men. Van Artevelde then addressed his followers in a most animating speech, as they stood ready for the onset. Count Louis came to the attack with a force of 40,000 men; but Van Artevelde received him manfully, and suddenly unmasking his cannon, which had been concealed behind the cars, he gained, in despite of the superior numbers of his assailants, the complete and splendid victory of Boverhout (1382). The men of Ghent entered Bruges in triumph, pursuing the Count so hotly that he barely escaped with life by concealing himself in the bed of some female of low condition. All Bruges was compelled to take the oath of fidelity to Ghent, those who refused being put to death. An immense booty was conveyed to Ghent, including the gilt dragon, which still adorns the Beffroi. All Flanders now submitted to Ghent, and Van Artevelde, on his return, received the honors of a triumph, and was proclaimed the father and saviour of his country.

With his accustomed magnanimity, Van Artevelde again proposed a reconciliation between Louis and his revolted subjects, to which end he entreated the mediation of the young king of France, Charles VI. But the proud military barons of that age, alarmed at the spread of popular principles, indicated by the rising, called the *Jacquerie* among the peasantry of France, and by the repeated quarrels of the Flemings with their princes, had resolved to join heart and hand with Louis de Mâle for

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his re-establishment in his inheritance, and for the destruction of the usurping burgher-sovereign, who gave such terrible lessons of liberty and victory to their serfs by means of his gallant men of Ghent. Under their counsels, the king treated the message of Van Artevelde with scorn, and mustered a powerful army of his own subjects for the succor of Louis de Mâle. The men of Ghent met with several minor reverses, and were finally overcome in the bloody battle of Roosebeke, in which Van Artevelde and 20,000 of his followers were slain. They fought bravely and perseveringly, but fell before the superior skill or prowess of the chivalry of France.

This event settled the question at issue between the feudal aristocracy and their uneasy vassals, and postponed the deliverance of Europe for three hundred years. All Flanders, except Ghent alone, immediately submitted to the Count; but the men of Ghent still held out. To the envoys, whom he sent to treat with them, they replied that they would never acknowledge his authority. 'No,' said they, 'he is not our sovereign, but our tyrant. Resolved to dare all, and suffer all, we declare war against him unto death, and if he re-enter our city, it must be to reign over ashes and dead bodies.' Having at their head Francis Ackerman, the companion and successor of Van Artevelde, they continued the war with invincible pertinacity. At length, Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, who aspired to the possession of Flanders as son in law to Louis de Mâle, and who feared, that unless he could effect an accommodation, the whole country would fall into the hands of France by right of conquest, made such concessions as led to a stable peace, by granting a full pardon and a confirmation of all their privileges to the brave citizens of Ghent (1385). But the burgher power had been shattered in the disastrous battle of Roosebeke; and although the spirit of liberty broke out among them from time to time, in consequence of the oppressions of their princes of the house of Burgundy, it was never afterwards so brilliantly displayed, as under the direction of the two Van Arteveldes.

The men of Ghent followed Philip the Good to the siege of Calais in the year 1435, and were always in quarrel with the citizens of Bruges. Indeed, they continued to yield a turbulent obedience to their sovereign until the year 1449, when they took up arms on account of some obnoxious duties imposed by Philip. The contest was long continued and disas-

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trous to both parties, the principal towns of Flanders being taken first by one and then by the other, as the chances of war vibrated between them. The men of Ghent were finally vanquished in a bloody battle, fought on the plains of Gavre, losing 16,000 soldiers, who perished on the field or were drowned in the waters of the Scheldt. Being compelled to submit after this defeat, they obtained a humiliating peace only at the expense of a heavy fine, and the sacrifice of a part of their immunities. At the inauguration of Charles the Bold (1467), they sought to regain what they lost in the treaty of Gavre, but, awed by the vindictive temper of that prince, they submitted anew, and suffered a further abridgment of the liberties they cherished so dearly.

When the splendid succession of the house of Burgundy devolved upon the feeble daughter of Duke Charles, the people of Ghent, still taking the lead in the affairs of their country, defeated the attempts of the intriguing Louis XI. of France to gain possession of Flanders. Having ascertained that Mary was disposed to follow too implicitly the counsels of her two ministers, the Seigneur d' Imbercourt and the Chancellor Hugonet, they arrested these unfortunate men, and caused them to be beheaded, in spite of the entreaties and remonstrances of Mary. They followed up this bold deed by concluding a matrimonial alliance for this princess with Maximilian of Austria, son of the Emperor Frederic. On the death of Mary, a dispute arose between the people of Ghent and Maximilian, who severally claimed the wardship of her young children, and for several years the citizens maintained their pretensions. Maximilian finally compelled them to submit by the German troop which he was enabled to levy in his paternal states, and would have laid waste the city but for the remonstrances of Philippe de Clèves, who represented to him that in destroying Ghent he lost 'the flower and pearl of all his dominions' (1485). The inhabitants, however, were not long quiet, for three years afterwards they rose against him once more, and thus drew upon themselves the resentment of the Emperor Frederic. This new foe entered Belgium with a formidable army, and laid siege to Ghent, but was manfully resisted by the burghers under Philippe de Clèves and Adrian Vilain, and forced to make a shameful retreat from their territory.

Ghent has the honor to number among the great men, who were born within her walls, the Emperor Charles V. His

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mother, Juana of Arragon, was delivered of the future monarch in a private cabinet, whither she had retired for a moment from the festivities of a ball, (Feb. 25, 1500). This cabinet was embellished during his reign with bas-reliefs in honor of the event, of which it was the scene, but was neglected and forgotten in after years, until M. Voisin, the historian of Ghent, by following the exact indications given by one of the old chronicles, discovered the place in the humble use of one of the lumber-rooms of a cotton manufactory. Charles appears to have entertained a strong feeling of sincere attachment towards his native city, although, when he rose to be king of Spain, Naples, and the Indies, and Emperor of Germany, Flanders became of necessity a less prominent object of his attention. Under the mild rule of his aunt, Margaret of Austria, and his sister Mary, Ghent enjoyed a long period of peaceful submission, and flourished greatly, notwithstanding the continual wars of the ambitious Emperor.

Guicciardini visited Ghent at this period, and speaks in high terms of the prosperity of the city. He describes it as being 'strong, handsome, and one of the largest cities in Europe, having ample suburbs, and being likened by many to the magnificent and populous city of Milan.' The burghers he characterizes as 'highly informed, great politicians, severe, and of a martial spirit.' He signalizes two things in which Ghent was peculiar, and they both show how far this city was in advance of the rest of Northern Europe. 'In Ghent,' he says, 'they exhibit great piety and good order in the establishment of schools and regulations for the support and nourishment of a large number of paupers, who are educated at the expense of the city. Here, also, for parade of grandeur and magnificence, they maintain lions, bears, wolves, and other cruel wild beasts from foreign countries.'

The despotic spirit of Charles, which, in depriving the Spaniards of their franchises, contributed so largely to bring on the ages of abasement, under which the Peninsula has half become a desert, could ill brook any demonstration of their ancient love of liberty, on the part even of his Flemish countrymen. Unfortunately for Ghent, that city became involved in a quarrel with the Emperor, wherein, although the latter was wholly in the wrong, might got the better of right. It happened thus. In the year 1539, Charles gave orders to levy an extraordinary tax of twelve hundred thousand florins in the Low Countries,

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for aid in prosecuting a war against France. The people of Ghent, who then carried on a most extensive and lucrative commerce with France, refused their consent to the subsidy, alleging in justification of their refusal, that by the ancient charters of the city, which the ancestors of the Emperor had conceded, and which he himself had sworn to maintain, no tax could be imposed on them without their express approbation. Hereupon the Governess, Mary of Hungary, arrested, in Brussels, Mechlin, and Antwerp, all the merchants of Ghent, who happened to be in those cities. This act of arbitrary violence aroused the old feelings of independence among the people. They immediately sent deputies to the Emperor in Spain to justify themselves and demand the release of their fellow-citizens; but Charles received them with a sternness that was new to them, and sent their cause back to his council of Mechlin, which adjudged their pretensions to be unfounded. Irritated to madness by this unjust decree, they now flew to arms in defence of the liberties of Flanders, regardless of the irresistible power and austere temper of the prince, whose resentment they provoked.

They began by expelling from the city all the nobles who had fixed their residence there, and imprisoning the officers of the Emperor. Next they subjected to the torture and then to sentence of death, Lievin Pyn, one of the Deans, who was accused of having removed or destroyed the charter under which they claimed the right of intervening in the levy of all taxes demanded by their sovereigns. In short, they appointed a council of safety, commenced repairing their fortifications, and openly raised the standard of revolt. Conscious, however, of their incapacity to make head alone against the forces of Charles, they counted upon the hostility of France towards him, as offering them chances of success. Accordingly they despatched envoys to Francis I., proposing to acknowledge him as sovereign of Flanders, and tendering their aid to enable him to reconquer all the ancient provinces of France. By an absurd refinement of generosity, not called for by any reasonable principles of honor, and totally unmerited by the conduct of Charles, who had scrupled at no device of political fraud to ruin Francis, this monarch not only rejected this proposal with scorn, but most unfairly communicated their plans to the Emperor. Encouraged thus by the misguided chivalry of his injured rival, Charles asked and obtained permission to cross the kingdom

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of France for the purpose of more speedily repairing to Ghent, and punishing the refractory burghers; thus committing himself, although he kept faith with no man, when it was or seemed to be for his present interest to be treacherous, to the good faith and hospitality of the credulous Francis.

When the men of Ghent found that they had been betrayed to their prince by Francis, and that Charles was marching on them with a large force, which they had no sufficient means to withstand, they hastily despatched deputies to beg for mercy. Charles haughtily replied, that he should appear among them only as a sovereign, with the sceptre in one hand and the sword in the other. He entered Ghent without opposition (February 24, 1540), and having caused the gates to be shut, and posted a strong garrison within the walls, he proceeded to take measures to punish the inhabitants. While deliberating upon this subject, he asked the advice of the cruel Duke of Alba, who answered that he ought to raze the city to the ground. Charles conducted the Duke to the gallery of the Beffroi, that the latter might obtain a clear idea of the immense size and wealth of the city; and then asked him in the French language how many Spanish skins it would take to make a *glove* of such magnitude:—'Combien il fallait de peaux d'Espagne pour faire un *gant* de cette grandeur.' Alba received the rebuke in silence, perceiving that the Emperor was shocked at the brutality of such a proposal as the total destruction of Ghent. The sentence actually passed upon the city was sufficiently severe.

The cause of Ghent was tried in presence of the Emperor himself, and the city was pronounced guilty of high treason in the first degree. Twenty-six of the principal citizens were capitally executed, and a still greater number banished, their estates being confiscated for the benefit of the imperial treasury. The magistrates, thirty of the most eminent citizens, the deans of each trade, with fifty other persons, were condemned to walk in public, bare-footed and bare-headed, with ropes on their necks, and beg pardon of the Emperor and his sister. The magistrates were also condemned to wear a rope round the neck on all public occasions, as a permanent mark of ignominy; but they afterwards converted their humiliating badge into an ornament, by employing a rich cord of silk, worn in the form of a scarf. All the fortifications of the city were at the same time demolished, its franchises and privileges suppressed,

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and its revenues, arms, and municipal property sequestered, including the bells, which had played too noisy a part during the insurrection to pass unnoticed. In fact, the Emperor joyfully availed himself of this opportunity to break down the free spirit and abolish the immunities of the inhabitants of the Netherlands. Ghent, which owed so much of her prosperity to her free institutions, never recovered from this fatal blow.

But calamities of a still more overwhelming character were now impending over her, in common with the other cities of Flanders and the Low Countries, under the reign of one of the most ferocious of the tyrants, who are so often imposed on mankind by hereditary succession in public authority. Philip II. visited Ghent for the last time in the year 1559. He had not yet proceeded in the execution of those measures of insane misrule, which filled the Netherlands with bloodshed and misery for so many years; but his temper was beginning to be too well known, and his purposes were become a subject of deep apprehension. In the assembly of the States General, holden at the Maison-de-ville, the syndic of Ghent remonstrated against the continued occupation of the country by foreign troops, in the genuine language of republican truth. 'Why,' said the syndic, 'is our defence entrusted to the arms of foreigners? Is it that the world should be induced to regard us as cowards, as men incapable of defending themselves! Why is a peace concluded, if the charges of war are still to be pressing heavily upon us? So long as we had enemies to combat, necessity suspended our complaints; but now, when peace is restored to us, we cannot disguise our despair. Why maintain, at so much expense, these foreign bands, who feel no sympathy in the welfare of a country, which they may be called upon to quit tomorrow? You have still in your service courageous Belgians, to whom your late father entrusted the safeguard of his States, in times infinitely more stormy; why suspect now that fidelity which they have invariably maintained towards your ancestors for so many ages?'—Confounded at the boldness of this address, and starting at the iteration of the word foreigner, Philip rose abruptly, crying, 'I am a foreigner also: perhaps you would like to get rid of me as well as the others.' Happy would it have been for Belgium if the syndic could have replied in the affirmative, and if some Van Artevelde had been there to accomplish so desirable an object.

The year 1566 witnessed the horrible outrages of the *Icon-*

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oclasts, as those wild sectarians were denominated, who pillaged the churches, and destroyed all their ornaments of sculpture and painting. The field preachings of these persons commenced near Ghent, in a plain only half a league without the gates, where the famous Herman Stricker attracted immense crowds of the inhabitants of the city, carried away by a resistless enthusiasm, and animated with the spirit which provokes and encounters martyrdom. Among them were multitudes of intelligent men, shocked, as in other countries, by the abuses of the established church, and anxious to introduce a reformed religion. Unhappily the excesses of the more desperate and less enlightened among those of their party threw a blight over their cause, from which it never recovered in Belgium. The image-breakers assembled at Ghent, to the number of 400 men of the very dregs of the people (August 22, 1566), and, after announcing their intentions to the magistrates of the city, and their resolution to effect what they had undertaken, by force if necessary, they proceeded, not only unopposed, but with a band of peace officers in their company, to prevent any disorder from happening, other than the violence which they had thus deliberately set about. They began with the cathedral church of Saint Bavon, entering it armed with axes, hammers, and pikes,—and performing the work of devastation at midnight by the blaze of lighted torches, which communicated a kind of horrid brilliancy to the scene of sacrilegious outrage, enacted by these lawless men. They wrenched the images of the saints from their pedestals and niches, dashing them in pieces with their heavy axes, tore up the paintings, despoiled the sculptured monuments, and wreaked their vengeance upon every work of art or taste which enriched the splendid edifice. In the course of three or four days all the churches and convents in Ghent were subjected to a similar visitation, being ravaged and defaced with the brutal fury of madmen or savages,—so as to give but too much cause of resentment to the bigoted Court of Philip of Spain.

Incidents of this kind occurring at the same time throughout Flanders and Brabant, were the commencement of the war of revolution, which the atrocities of Philip had aroused. The Duke of Alba was now transferred from the viceroyalty of Italy, to be the fit instrument of his cruel master in devastating the Netherlands, under the pretence of restoring the tranquillity of the country. Under the government of this merciless op-

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pressor, who rendered the ancient and noble name of Toledo a by-word for the very extremity of despotic mal-administration, Ghent, of course, felt its full share of the horrors of that period. Confiscation and death filled all hearts with mourning and terror. Hardly a day passed when the fires of the Holy Office were not lighted up in the Marché au Vendredi, for the torture of some unhappy victim of superstition or cupidity. Thousands of the citizens fled in despair from their homes, carrying their industry and skill into Germany and England. Much of the prosperity of the latter is ascribable to the manufactures introduced by the multitude of exiles, whom religious persecution drove from the continent. It is affirmed, that at this time (1570) half the houses in the city were abandoned. The year was marked by a complication of the direst afflictions; for a pestilence raged in the most populous region of the city, and soon afterwards three quarters of the streets were wholly inundated by the rising of the waters, so that it became necessary to convey food by means of boats to the starving occupants of the houses.

The year 1576 was memorable at Ghent for the treaty between the states of Holland on the one hand, and those of Belgium on the other, which, from being concluded there, is distinguished by the name of the Pacification of Ghent, but belongs to the general history of the country. While this celebrated compact was in the course of negotiation, the citizens were engaged in the siege of the citadel, constructed by Charles V. after the insurrection of the year 1540, and now held by a body of Spanish soldiers for Philip. In spite of all the force which the citizens could bring against it, aided, as they were, by the troops of the Prince of Orange, the besieged made an obstinate defence, displaying the characteristic pertinacity of the Spanish people in such emergencies, and occasioning infinite loss to the besiegers. When at last they were obliged to surrender, they obtained honorable terms of capitulation, and the citizens were astonished to see the Señora Mondragon, who had defended the fortress in the absence of her husband, issue forth at the head of only 150 men, including the sick and wounded, the sole remains of the garrison. This heroic lady had nobly performed all the duties of a brave commander, and the other females in the citadel had faithfully supported her, having displayed in the operations of the siege the activity and fearlessness of danger of veteran soldiers. When the people

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had thus gained possession of the citadel, they joyfully proceeded to demolish the stronghold of tyranny, men, women and children marching out together with beat of drum and banners flying, alike eager to engage in this work of liberty and patriotism.

It is easy to conceive that the long succession of troubles, which had now for so many years weighed upon Flanders, must have produced a pernicious effect on the character and feelings of the people. The hearts of men became hardened by the continued spectacle of civil war, murder, pillage, and executions in every form of cruelty. The interruption of the ordinary means of subsistence in a large manufacturing city, threw thousands into the career of violence, as the only resource from starvation for themselves and their families. As the worst acts of Philip's tyranny had been perpetrated in the name of religion and of the Catholic church, hatred towards that church was mingled with the desire of vengeance. Nowhere had these considerations greater force than at Ghent. Two of the principal citizens, John Hembyse, and Francis de Kethulle, lord of Ryhove, took advantage of the situation of things there to institute an independent republic, of which they should be the chiefs. They sprung from families long distinguished at Ghent, were possessed of popular talents, and great energy of character, bold, unscrupulous, impatient of a foreign yoke, and preëminent for their uncompromising opposition to all the measures of the Duke of Alba. They succeeded in obtaining uncontrolled influence over the faction of the *Beggars, (Gueux)* as the opponents of the Catholics were content to be called, by flattering their passions, and feeding their necessities out of the plunder of churches and abbeys; and could collect a force of 20,000 followers at any moment, for the accomplishment of whatever purpose.

The Duke of Arschot had been elected Governor of Flanders by the patriots, who were now everywhere triumphant, and had come to make his residence in Ghent, as the capital of his government. Hembyse and Ryhove saw that his authority stood in the way of their prospects of ambition, and in less than a week after his arrival they raised their followers, and arrested him, with many other principal persons, on the charge of complicity in a plot in favor of Spain (October 28, 1577). For several days the populace remained under arms, occupying the great squares, while Hembyse and Ryhove seized on

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the public funds, assumed the management of affairs, the first as civil, and the second as military chief, and proceeded to make a permanent organization of their new republic, professing to model it, as nearly as might be, after the plan of polity which had prevailed in ancient Greece and Rome.

In execution of their scheme, they nominated two councils, one of magistrates, and the other of military officers, by whose concurring votes all important measures were adopted. The civil council consisted of eighteen members, headed by Hembyse himself, and all of them sworn adherents of the Duumvirs. The council of war was composed of the colonels and captains of the civic bands, organized by the same controlling will. To complete the municipal democracy, they revived the companies of trades, which Charles V. had suppressed in the general sequestration of the privileges of Ghent, but which resumed their banners, and reappointed their deans, as of old. The Prince of Orange came to Ghent soon after these events, in order to procure the release of the imprisoned Catholics, and if possible substitute the regular magistracy of the city in lieu of this revolutionary government. But although he was received with the greatest magnificence, and all apparent deference was paid to his advice, his visit was wholly without effect, and his departure was the signal for commencing the disorders which signalized the rule of Hembyse and Ryhove.

Entertaining the idea of rendering Ghent impregnable and the capital of an extensive republic, the consuls began by digging ditches around the city, and demolishing the neighboring churches for materials to face the fortifications. They stripped the churches, both within and without the city, of their bells, chandeliers, and metallic utensils, to be melted into cannons, and siezed all the ornaments of gold and silver for the purpose of being coined into money. Saint Bavon was converted into the chief temple of the Protestant preachers, while Saint Nicolas became the stable and barracks of a troop of two hundred dragoons. The various rich abbeys, dispersed around the country, were pillaged and destroyed with a fury far more reprehensible than that of the iconoclasts, as the outrages of the latter were nothing but a sudden paroxysm of misguided religious zeal, while the agents of Hembyse acted from a fixed purpose of sacrilegious devastation.

While Hembyse was thus occupied within the city, his colleague Ryhove was gathering military laurels without, in vari-

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ous expeditions, which terminated with brilliant success. He commanded a powerful body of troops, domestic and mercenary, which were engaged in continual combat either against opposing factions or the common enemy. Courtrai, Audenarde, Bruges, and Termonde yielded to his arms; and the credit he thus gained led to the result which might easily have been anticipated, by awakening jealousy and dissension between the consuls themselves. The violences exercised in their name had of necessity raised up many enemies against them; and although they abstained from taking the lives of the disaffected, and remained content with inflicting the sentence of banishment, yet general distrust and agitation could not fail to pervade a city, thus given up to the domination of a lawless faction and its ambitious leaders.

At length, after every effort to put an end to these disorders had been attempted by such of the principal individuals in Belgium, as were exempt from the sway of the chiefs of Ghent, and had failed, Elizabeth of England wrote letters to the magistrates of Ghent, reproaching them in the strongest terms for their misconduct. As the state of the contest between the Netherlands and Spain rendered the good will of Elizabeth all important to the patriots, her interposition in this instance threw Hembyse and Ryhove into some perplexity. It was given out that the Prince of Orange was preparing to come to Ghent, and employ efficacious means to depose the popular dictators. In anticipation of this, Ryhove began to look about for means of making his peace, and to attain this object he did not scruple to arrest his friend and colleague. But the populace, furious at the indignity offered to their idol, surrounded the house of Ryhove, and compelled him to set Hembyse free. The Prince of Orange finally arrived, and although he brought no troops to enforce his wishes, the influence of his name and the firmness of his character were sufficient to break down the power of the Duumvirs, and restore the regular administration of the laws. Ryhove was at this time at Termonde, and he prudently withdrew into Holland, where he lived unmolested and died a natural death. Hembyse fled from Ghent in disguise, and took refuge in Germany. After a few years, the party of the Beggars once more gained a temporary ascendancy, and recalled him to Ghent, to resume his old authority. But his love of power getting the better of his love of country, he secretly entered into negotiations with the Spaniards, which

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being discovered, he was deposed, and ignominiously executed for treason, upon evident proofs of his guilt (1584). During the same year, in fact only a month after the death of Hembyse, the Prince of Parma, having reduced nearly all Flanders, laid siege to Ghent, which was soon obliged to capitulate, and with the rest of Belgium became once more subject to Spain. By the expulsion of the Protestants, tranquillity, at least, was secured, though at the expense of the industry, wealth, and intelligence of the country. Under the mild rule of Albert and Isabella, and their successors, Ghent participated for a century in the peace and comparative prosperity, which prevailed through the whole of Belgium. It was not until the capricious ambition of Lewis XIV. disturbed the repose of all Europe, that Flanders again became the seat of war. During the reigns of Lewis XIV., and Lewis XV. Ghent was taken and retaken repeatedly by opposing armies, but without being the scene of any remarkable incidents to separate its history from that of the rest of Belgium.

During the troubles occasioned by the innovations of the Emperor Joseph II., between the years 1789 and 1791, Ghent was sufficiently prominent in the efforts then made to render the whole country independent. But the French revolution had now broken out, and events were hurried on by the all controlling power of such mighty combinations of men, that no single city could materially affect their progress. Ghent, of course, changed masters, as the tide of war swelled or ebbed, partaking as well in the excesses of the republic, as in the adulation lavished on the person of Napoleon, and being finally disposed of by the victors of Waterloo, as best suited their own good pleasure. The days of the Arteveldes had passed away, and that condition of the world, which enabled a simple burgher of Ghent to exercise a puissant influence in the general affairs of Europe, subsisted no longer. From the palmy state, which it challenged in the middle ages, Ghent had sunk down into a manufacturing capital, distinguished, it is true, for the taste, refinement, and cultivation of its inhabitants, but deprived alike of the spirit of liberty and the exuberance of wealth, which once constituted its principal distinctions.

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ART. VI.—*Life and Writings of Crabbe.*

Life and Poetical Works of the Reverend GEORGE CRABBE. In 8 volumes. Vol. I. *Containing the Life of Crabbe.* By his SON. London. 1834.

ROUSSEAU declared that he must visit the man who had witnessed two summers in a single year; and readers in general will be glad to learn something of the personal history of one, who, after receiving the applause of Burke and Johnson, remained silent for more than twenty years, and came forth at last to receive the homage of another generation. In truth, when we speak of Crabbe, we feel as if we were speaking of one who belonged rather to the last century, than to ours; yet there is no other poet, whom the public have known so favorably and so long, of whose history they know so little; and his son has performed an acceptable service, as well as a filial duty, in treasuring up all that can now be remembered of a man of great ability and worth,—of a poet, distinguished for his manly and original powers. We shall avail ourselves of the contents of this volume, in order to present such a sketch of the prominent incidents of the life of Mr. Crabbe, as may be required to illustrate a cursory view of his writings.

Mr. Crabbe was born at Aldborough, on the Christmas eve of 1754. The circumstances of his family were very humble, and he has himself told us, with good humored sarcasm, of the vanity of one of his ancestors, who endeavored to repair in some degree the unkindness of fortune, by dignifying the family name, originally Crab, with the addition of two final letters. His father, after passing several years in the itinerant occupation of a schoolmaster, was at length installed in the offices of warehouse-keeper, and deputy-collector of the port of Aldborough, to which he afterwards added that of collector of the salt duties, or salt-master, as this officer is usually denominated. He appears to have united many valuable traits of character with repulsive sternness and severity; while his wife, on the other hand, to whom Crabbe often alludes in terms of affectionate veneration, was one of those beautiful examples of retiring Christian virtue, which, like the most delicate flowers, are rarely found but in the shade. There

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was little in the aspect of his native village to charm a poet's fancy: it was a barren and deserted spot, situated between the base of a low cliff and the shore of the German ocean; its dwellings were like those which are not unfrequently seen on the sands of our own coast, appearing as if drawn up at anchor on the shore; and it was peopled by a wild and amphibious race of fishermen and sailors, competently versed in the accomplishments which are apt to beset the men of perilous adventure. The landscape, notwithstanding the attempt made by some hardy poet to describe it as a scene of beauty, presented little to the eye excepting a desolate succession of unbroken heath and sand, enlivened with a meagre covering of weeds and rushes; there was in fact nothing in the prospect to excite or fire the poetical imagination, but the ever varying aspect of the ocean, on which, as is obvious from all Crabbe's writings, he loved to dwell. The social aspect of his residence was, if possible, still less inviting than the face of nature. His home was rendered sad and desolate by the harshness of his father; and there were none abroad among whom his own tastes could find the least encouragement or sympathy. His youthful proficiency in the art of managing a fishing boat was so indifferent, that his father would sometimes ask, in the bitterness of his heart, 'What that *thing* would ever be good for?' It should be stated, however, that the father had sense enough to discover the talent of his son, and, as the latter afterwards acknowledged with gratitude, labored to provide him with such means of education as his own limited resources would allow. But the literary toleration of the salt-master did not extend to so crying a heresy as poetry: he was a subscriber to some philosophical magazine, the gravity of whose pages was regularly enlivened with a score or two of verses; these it was his custom to cut out when he sent the numbers to be bound, and they were treasured up as a rich possession by his son, who found in them his first models of the art, in which he afterwards excelled.

In his eleventh or twelfth year, after having attended a village school, for what period we are not informed, he was removed to another, where he was expected to prepare himself to become apprentice to a surgeon. He is said here to have exhibited a decided taste for mathematical pursuits, as well as for poetry, in which he made his first essay in the form of a salutary caution to a school girl, not to suffer herself

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to be too much elated by the triumph of displaying new ribbons on her bonnet. Some time elapsed, after he left this school, before he could find an opportunity of entering upon the business he intended to pursue. A portion of this time was spent in musing, in his solitary walks by the sea shore; but the greater part was occupied in piling butter and cheese on the quay at Aldborough, under the direction of his father, who entertained no great opinion of idleness, and least of all that which was consecrated to poetic dreams. This occupation was long remembered by the poet with little satisfaction. At length, in his fourteenth year, the long expected opportunity was presented; and he set forth, with a heavy heart, to become apprentice to a surgeon at Wickham Brook. His pursuits, even there, were not wholly of a scientific kind; his master distributed his time impartially between the arts of husbandry and healing, and his apprentice was the bed-fellow and fellow-laborer of his plough boy. In this way, he passed about two years; then he removed to a more eligible situation, to complete the term of his apprenticeship under the direction of a surgeon at Woolridge, a few miles distant from his native village. Poetry still continued to occupy a large share of his attention: he was never much in love with his profession, though he devoted himself to it with tolerable earnestness. He found a source of inspiration, which youthful poets never wait for long, in an attachment which he here formed for the niece of a wealthy farmer, who twelve years afterwards became his wife, and in the mean time stimulated his literary zeal by encouragement, which proved in the result to be both fortunate and wise. A small premium for a poem on the subject of Hope, was offered by the proprietor of some Ladies' Magazine: this prize it was his fortune to gain, and the success, trifling as it was, set all the springs of his poetical enthusiasm in motion. It was here, also, that he published a poem, entitled 'Inebriety,' a name of no particular attraction; this work is said to exhibit much facility of versification and maturity of thought, but attracted little notice at the time.

Mr. Crabbe's term of apprenticeship ended in 1775; he then returned to Aldborough, hoping to find some means of completing his professional education in London; but his father's means were inadequate to this demand, as well as to maintaining him in idleness at home: he returned therefore to his old labors at the warehouse, which were rendered doubly irk-

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some by new circumstances of domestic sorrow. The habits of his father had undergone that change, which fills the cup of affliction to the brim; and the health of his mother, in whose happiness his own was bound up, was sinking under a fatal and quick decline. Impelled less by choice than a sense of its necessity, he devoted himself with more zeal than before to the study of his profession, and the sciences connected with it; particularly botany, which was then and afterwards his favorite pursuit. At length his father found the means of sending him to London, with a purse too slender to attend lectures or to walk the hospitals, and only with the hope, as he himself said, of picking up a little surgical knowledge as cheaply as he could. In the course of a few months, he returned to Aldborough, but with no propitious change in his prospects or his fortune. There he became assistant to a surgeon, who soon retired from the village, and left him at liberty to set up for himself: but he had a rival in the field, and his own practice was the least productive which the place afforded. His patients, who saw his botanical researches, thought it unreasonable that they should be called upon to pay for medicines collected in the fields and ditches. On the whole, his prospects were not very encouraging, and not the least of his afflictions was a sense of his deficiency in professional knowledge and skill. A transient gleam of sunshine broke out in 1778, when the Warwickshire militia were quartered in his neighborhood, with whose officers, as their medical attendant, he formed some useful intimacies. He felt, however, that Aldborough was no place for him, and resolved to take the earliest opportunity to leave it. It was late in the year 1779, at the close of a cold and gloomy day, when, as he was wandering on the bleak cliff above the village, he determined to abandon his profession, and embark on the uncertain sea of literary adventure. He stopped before a shallow, muddy sheet of water, as dark and desolate as his own thoughts, and, as he gazed upon it, resolved to go to London and to venture all.

His prospects must have indeed been melancholy, to impel him to a resolution, apparently so hopeless. His health was not firm,—the reception of his poetical attempts had not been flattering, and his nerves were ill calculated to wrestle with adversity. There was not a single friend in the metropolis, on whom he could rely for aid. He had also to endure the reproaches of his father, who did not, however, labor much to

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change his purpose. The means of effecting it were yet to be found; his own immediate friends were unable or unwilling to supply them, and he applied to Mr. Dudley North, to whom his father had been useful in some political canvass, for the loan of five pounds. The letter, in which he made the application, was afterwards described by that gentleman as a very extraordinary one: his request was readily granted; and, with three pounds in his pocket, a case of surgical instruments, and a box of clothing, the whole stock of his worldly fortune, he embarked on board a little sloop, and took his way to London.

It was in the year 1780, that he reached that city; a propitious period, as his biographer remarks, for an adventurer in poetry, if indeed the good fortune of a poet can be said to consist in the absence of a rival. Goldsmith, Gray, and Churchill were dead; Johnson had long before abandoned poetry, and was drawing near the close of his eminent career; the genius of Cowper, which bloomed, like the witch-hazel, in the late autumn of his years, had not yet been revealed; and the echo of the fame of Burns had hardly crossed the Scottish border. His biographer is, however, mistaken, if he supposes that the demand for poetry in the literary market is governed by the extent of the supply; and who was to assure the young adventurer, that he could fill the vacant place in the admiration of the world? He came without a patron; he could claim but a single acquaintance in London, and she was the wife of a linen draper in Cornhill, not particularly likely to forward his literary projects, though kind and liberal in her attentions. He took lodgings at the house of a hairdresser, near the Exchange, and set himself, with a firm and manly spirit, about the doubtful task before him; first transcribing the poetical pieces he brought with him from the country, composing one or two dramas and essays in prose, and laboring to improve his versification, and to become familiar with such books as he found at his command. Some of his intimates, at this period, were in circumstances not unlike his own, and were similarly fortunate in their subsequent life. Among them was Mr. Bonnycastle, late master of the Military Academy at Woolwich, and Isaac Dalby and Reuben Barrow, both mathematicians of distinguished eminence. It deserves to be recorded to his honor, that during this period, while he was tortured by anxiety and depressed by poverty, he kept his mind always fixed on the object of his pursuit, neither yielding to

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the sore temptations of adverse fortune, nor ever sinking in despondency. Some of his pieces were offered to the booksellers, and were rejected; he tried new subjects, and labored still harder than before, but with no better success. An anonymous poem, called 'The Candidate,' was published at his own charge, but found no public welcome; and the failure of his bookseller compelled him to take refuge in the last shelter to which a sensitive mind can resort, an application for pecuniary aid to strangers. For this he first applied to Lord North, but in vain; a similar appeal to Lord Shelburne produced no answer. After addressing several letters to that coarsest of illustrious personages, Lord Chancellor Thurlow, he received a cold reply, purporting that his lordship's avocations left him no leisure to read verses. In his journal, written at this time, he says: 'I have parted with my money, sold my wardrobe, pawned my watch, am in debt to my landlord, and finally, am at some loss how to eat a week longer.' Another extract from the same journal will afford an idea of the spirit and temper, with which he bore himself under these hard circumstances. 'It is the vilest thing in the world to have but one coat. My only one has met with a mischance, and how to manage it is some difficulty. A confounded stove's modish ornament caught its elbow, and rent it half away. Pinioned to the side it came home, and I ran deploring to my loft. In the dilemma, it occurred to me to turn tailor myself, but how to get materials to work with puzzled me. At last I went running down in a hurry, with three or four sheets of paper in my hand, and begged for a needle and thread to sew them together. This finished my job, and, but that it is somewhat thicker, the elbow is a good one yet.' The portion of the journal given in this volume, is quite valuable, as presenting a picture of a manly spirit, tried by a kind of suffering, which the heart of every one will tell him is severe. There is nothing of querulousness in it: no more of despondency, than the circumstances of his situation could not fail to excite; it betrays throughout the energies of a strong mind, and the tranquillity of a religious one. Mr. Crabbe's repeated applications to *ex officio* patrons having thus proved fruitless, he resolved to make one final effort: and he fortunately directed himself to one, who was as much above the hereditary or created peers around him in generous feeling, as he was in the miraculous endowments of his mind. He addressed the following letter to Edmund Burke.

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'Sir, I am sensible, that I need even your talents to apologize for the freedom I now take; but I have a plea which, however simply urged, will, with a mind like yours, Sir, procure me pardon: I am one of those outcasts on the world, who are without a friend, without employment, and without bread.

'Pardon me a short preface. I had a partial father, who gave me a better education than his broken fortune would have allowed; and a better than was necessary, as he could give me that only. I was designed for the profession of physic; but not having wherewithal to complete the requisite studies, the design but served to convince me of a parent's affection, and the error it had occasioned. In April last I came to London, with three pounds, and flattered myself this would be sufficient to supply me with the common necessaries of life, till my abilities would procure me more; of these I had the highest opinion, and a poetical vanity contributed to my delusion. I knew little of the world, and had read books only; I wrote, and fancied perfection in my compositions; when I wanted bread they promised me affluence, and soothed me with dreams of reputation, whilst my appearance subjected me to contempt.

'Time, reflection and want have showed me my mistake. I see my trifles in that which I think the true light; and whilst I deem them such, have yet the opinion that holds them superior to the common run of poetical publications.

'I had some knowledge of the late Mr. Nassau, the brother of Lord Rochford; in consequence of which I asked his Lordship's permission to inscribe my little work to him. Knowing it to be free from all political allusions and personal abuse, it was no very material point to me to whom it was dedicated. His Lordship thought it none to him, and obligingly consented to my request.

'I was told that a subscription would be the more profitable method for me, and therefore endeavored to circulate copies of the enclosed Proposals.

'I am afraid, Sir, I disgust you with this very dull narration, but believe me punished in the misery that occasions it. You will conclude that, during this time, I must have been at more expense than I could afford; indeed the most parsimonious could not have avoided it. The printer deceived me, and my little business has had every delay. The people with whom I live perceive my situation, and find me to be indigent and without friends. About ten days since, I was compelled to give a note for seven pounds, to avoid an arrest for about double that sum which I owe. I wrote to every friend I had, but my friends are poor likewise; the time of payment approached, and I ventured

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to represent my case to Lord Rochford. I begged to be credited for this sum till I received it of my subscribers, which I believe will be within one month; but to this letter I had no reply, and I have probably offended by my importunity. Having used every honest means in vain, I yesterday confessed my inability, and obtained with much entreaty, and as the greatest favor, a week's forbearance, when I am positively told, that I must pay the money, or prepare for a prison.

'You will guess the purpose of so long an introduction. I appeal to you, Sir, as a good, and, let me add, a great man. I have no other pretensions to your favor than that I am an unhappy one. It is not easy to support the thoughts of confinement; and I am coward enough to dread such an end to my suspense.

'Can you, Sir, in any degree, aid me with propriety?—Will you ask any demonstrations of my veracity? I have imposed upon myself, but I have been guilty of no other imposition. Let me, if possible, interest your compassion. I know those of rank and fortune are teased with frequent petitions, and are compelled to refuse the requests even of those whom they know to be in distress: it is, therefore, with a distant hope I venture to solicit such a favor: but you will forgive me, Sir, if you do not think proper to relieve. It is impossible that sentiments like yours can proceed from any but a humane and generous heart.

'I will call upon you, Sir, to-morrow, and if I have not the happiness to obtain credit with you, I must submit to my fate. My existence is a pain to myself, and every one near and dear to me is distressed in my distresses. My connexions, once the source of happiness, now embitter the reverse of my fortune, and I have only to hope a speedy end to a life so unpromisingly begun: in which (though it ought not to be boasted of) I can reap some consolation from looking to the end of it. I am, Sir, with the greatest respect, your obedient and most humble servant,

GEORGE CRABBE.'

It is not easy to read any thing relating to Edmund Burke, without pausing for a moment, to indulge in the thousand recollections, which gather round his name. He was a man, whose like has been seldom seen in the sphere of human intelligences, and will not soon be seen again. Almost in his youth, he rose to that elevated point of philosophical reputation, of which his adopted country has not many examples to show; and shortly afterwards, he stood without a rival in the long line of her living or departed orators;—beyond and above them all in that affluence of thought, deep practical sagacity, and surpassing glory of rhetorical ornament, which make the

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voice of real eloquence as commanding in future ages, as in the moment of its most important victories. He combined the fervor of the most generous enthusiasm, with unerring insight into all the springs and sources of human character and action; deep scorn of all that was low and sordid with constant solicitude to advance the well-being of his race: and it might almost be considered a triumph of our nature, that one so highly gifted should have been so disinterested and confiding, so earnest in the cause of human happiness and right. It may be, that some of his political views, weighed in our balances and measured by our standards, are found wanting; but such a mind could not but be noble in its very errors; they were errors of judgment and not imperfections of the heart: they were the wreaths of mist, which intercept the glories of the morning sun, while they are kindled into beauty by its light. It was indeed a generous and manly spirit, to which the affecting appeal of the young adventurer was made. Men, who are engaged in conducting the destinies of nations, have rarely leisure to attend to individual concerns; the wholesale good which occupies their thoughts seems to acquit them of the obligation to be benevolent by retail. At this period, the mind of Mr. Burke was much absorbed in the fierce struggles of parliamentary war. His pecuniary circumstances were by no means those of affluence: of the pride or vanity of being deemed a patron, he had absolutely none; his charities were so unobtrusive, that he evidently thought them nothing more than daily acts of duty. There was probably nothing very peculiar in the circumstances of Mr. Crabbe; claims of equal strength, so far as his could then be known, might not unfrequently be held forth by others: he presented himself to Mr. Burke only as a young man of merit in distress. 'He went,' says his son, 'into Mr. Burke's room, a poor young adventurer, spurned by the opulent, and rejected by the publishers, his last shilling gone, and all but his last hope with it: he came out virtually secure of almost all the good fortune that, by successive steps, afterwards fell to his lot:—his genius acknowledged by one whose verdict could not be questioned,—his character and manners appreciated and approved by a noble and capacious heart, whose benevolence knew no limits but its power,—that of a giant in intellect, who was, in feeling, an unsophisticated child,—a bright example of the close affinity between superlative talents, and the warmth of the generous affections.' Mr.

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Burke immediately received him under his roof, and proceeded to examine his compositions, with the view of selecting a portion of them for the press. 'The Library,' and 'The Village,' appeared to him best suited to his purpose; he took the manuscripts himself to Dodsley, and gave the whole weight of his critical decision in their favor. The worthy bookseller indeed declined to take the hazard of the publication, but used every effort to procure for them a rapid sale, and uniformly treated the author with a liberality, which was always gratefully acknowledged. Of these poems, 'The Library' was published first, and was shortly afterwards followed by 'The Village.' The latter is a much better example of Crabbe's peculiar power, than the former; we shall therefore detain our readers for a moment by some remarks upon its style and character.

It was the principal object of the writer to represent rural character, and scenery, and manners as they are, without much regard to that rule of taste, which rejects from the picture all those incidents, which might impair its pleasing and harmonious effect. The venerable pastoral had been transported from old times and other climates, just as Chinese pagodas and Grecian temples are erected to embellish the pleasure grounds of an English nobleman, giving an artificial aspect to the scene, quite at variance with the purposes of nature. It was cherished by modern poets with as much zeal, as the French dramatists adhere to their Greek model, and of course was cold and unnatural to those, whose imaginations were too faint to clothe the fields of Albion with the verdure of Arcadia, or to convert ploughmen and day laborers into the musing shepherds of the golden age. Gay's Pastorals, intentionally coarse and ludicrous as they are, are more true to nature than those of Pope; because these were never designed to be faithful to nature, but only to present a pleasing copy of a work of ancient art. Goldsmith's descriptions have more of truth about them, but the sunlight rests on these as on our landscape in the Indian summer; there is a soft haze which veils the ruder features of the prospect, and the dreary sky and gathering storm are kept entirely from the view. Crabbe's error was just the opposite one; he was himself familiar with all the dark shades of village life, and in his own depressed and sad circumstances, they occupied and filled his imagination; he had himself experienced what others only sung, and had found it cheerless as the valley of the shadow of death. We all

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know how much our impressions of scenery and modes of life are governed by our feelings; the brightest sun is cold and melancholy to the mourner, and the dreariest landscape pleasing to the eye, when we ourselves are happy. Crabbe saw the country without pleasure, and left it without regret; to him it presented no recollections but those of disappointed hope: and he accordingly describes it with a stern and powerful hand, without compunction or mercy, and with colors too severely true.

'The Village' opens with a merciless rebuke of the 'fond Corydons,' who have studiously disregarded truth and nature in their pictures of rural life. The author avows his determination to reveal those real ills, which have been hitherto concealed beneath the vain trappings of poetic pride; and he forthwith proceeds to display a picture of his own,—not of green woods and sunny streams, of an innocent and artless race,—but a delineation, as powerful and vivid as it is repulsive, of the barren heaths of his native village, and the beings who inhabit it.

'Lo! where the heath, with withering brake grown o'er,
Lends the light turf that warms the neighboring poor:
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves its withered ears;
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land, and rob the blighted rye;
There thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war;
There poppies, nodding, mock the hope of toil;
There the blue bugloss paints the sterile soil;
Hardy and high, above the slender sheaf,
The slimy mallow waves her silky leaf;
O'er the young shoot the charlock throws a shade,
And clasping tares cling round the sickly blade;
With mingled tints the rocky coasts abound,
And a sad splendor vainly shines around.
So looks the maid, whom wretched arts adorn,
Betrayed by man, then left for man to scorn:
Whose cheek in vain assumes the mimic rose,
While her sad eyes the troubled breast disclose;
Whose outward splendor is but folly's dress,
Exposing most, when most it gilds distress.
Here joyless roam a wild amphibious race,
With sullen wo displayed in every face;

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Who far from civil arts and social fly,
And scowl at strangers with suspicious eye.'

These are scenes, in which nature has been sparing of her bounty; the poet now turns to those where plenty smiles; but there, too, he finds a contrast between apparent comfort and real misery, which throws the latter into even deeper shade. The laborers hoard up aches and anguish for their declining years by exposure to the sun and storm; they toil with earnestness, hoping to forget their wretchedness in the strong effort of manly pride; yet they sink to the earth beneath that hopeless poverty, which murders peace; and go down at last, worn and weary, into forsaken and unhonored age. The gates of the village poor house are thrown open to receive its most unwelcome guests.

'There is yon house that holds the parish poor,
Whose walls of mud scarce bear the broken door;
There, where the putrid vapors, flagging, play,
And the dull wheel hums doleful through the day:—
There children dwell who know no parents' care;
Parents, who know no children's love, dwell there!
Heart-broken matrons, on their joyless bed,
Forsaken wives, and mothers never wed:
Dejected widows, with unheeded tears,
And crippled age, with more than childhood's fears:
The lame, the blind, and, far the happiest they!
The moping idiot and the madman gay.
Here, too, the sick their final doom receive,
Here brought, amid the scene of grief, to grieve,
Where the loud groans from some sad chamber flow,
Mixed with the clamors of the crowd below;
Here, sorrowing, they each kindred sorrow scan,
And the cold charities of man to man:
Whose laws indeed for reverend age provide,
And strong compulsion plucks the scrap from pride;
But still that scrap is bought with many a sigh,
And pride embitters what it can't deny.'

Here is in truth a mass of misery, which reminds one of Virgil's description of the gate of Tartarus. The village doctor, with fate and physic in his eye, enters this abode of wretchedness, to insult the victim, whom he means to kill; hurries over some habitual queries, without waiting for a reply, and rushes to the door, leaving his patient to sink into the grave. The dying poor man asks the consolations of religion, and the murmuring nurse reluctantly summons the parish priest:

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'A jovial youth, who thinks his Sunday's task
As much as God or man can fairly ask:
The rest he gives to loves and labors light,
To fields the morning, and to feasts the night;
None better skilled the noisy pack to guide,
To urge their chase, to cheer them or to chide:
A sportsman keen, he shoots through half the day,
And, skilled at whist, devotes the night to play;
Then, while such honors bloom around his head,
Shall he sit sadly by the sick man's bed,
To raise the hope he feels not, or with zeal
To combat fears that ev'n the pious feel?'

Death comes at last, in a form far less repulsive than that of the overseer or church warden; the rejoicing parish cheerfully pay the frugal fees of interment; the mourners, 'sedately torpid and devoutly dumb,' enter the church; the fox-hunting priest is too busy to perform the last religious offices over one so humble, and the unblessed remains are committed to the dust. This is the destiny of the aged and the friendless; but what is the condition of the young, who, if any can be so, are full of enjoyment and of hope? They have some brief intervals of leisure and tranquillity, when the sabbath returns; but their employer is all the while murmuring at the exactions of Providence in demanding tithes, in addition to one day in seven. The stillness of the day of rest is broken by the clamor of vulgar debauchery: slander pours its bitterness into the shallow cup of pleasure; and the day closes with ale-house squabbles and coarse licentiousness.

Such is the portrait of rural life, given by a poet of originality and power; by one, who had seen what he described, and had sufficient purity of purpose to intend, at least, to describe it faithfully. Every one will see, from the sketches and the extracts we have given, that it is a dark and powerful representation, designed to shadow forth the same forbidding views of life, which are so vividly displayed in the prose and poetry of Johnson. Life is a sphere, of which the pastoral poets saw only the brilliant side, while Crabbe, at this period, was familiar only with the dark one; they all wanted some moral Mercator's projection, by which both hemispheres might be at once presented to the eye. We doubt whether either can produce a happy moral influence;—in order to do this, they must carry with them a conviction of their truth. Mr. Crabbe

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inverted the maxims of the Greek painter, in the execution of his portrait of the Queen of Love; instead of selecting and combining beauties, he left no blemish or deformity untouched, and produced a whole, every part of which might be true to nature, while its general impression was as false as it was frightful. But moral defects are the first to be forgiven: men were weary of the small poets who had undertaken to amuse them in the absence of the chief performers, and were glad to welcome one, who revived the ancient inspiration; they saw in Crabbe a poet of real abilities, who, if he resorted to old themes, treated them in a manner rarely witnessed before; they saw a model of versification, as finished and far more vigorous than that of Goldsmith, and inferior in his own language only to Pope. No wonder, under these circumstances, that the impression which he made was strong and lasting. His poems, at this period, were however brief and few: and those of his later years are so different in character, and so much more varied than these, that it would be wholly out of place here to offer any general remarks upon his rank and ability as a poet. We shall therefore pursue the brief sketch, which we proposed to give of the prominent incidents of his life.

The liberality of Mr. Burke was equally active and unwearied. At his table, Mr. Crabbe became intimately known to that illustrious circle, of which his friend was the chief ornament,—to Reynolds, Fox, and Johnson,—all of whom appear to have appreciated his abilities, and to have treated him with marked respect and kindness. Johnson, in particular, whose critical word was law, read 'The Village' in manuscript, and pronounced upon it a panegyric, of which he was never very prodigal. The views of life which it presented, so similar, as we have already intimated, to his own, may have been in some degree the cause of this complacency; but however this may have been, the eulogy was just; and when Johnson applauded, the lesser critics felt entirely safe in joining in the chorus. Even the Lord Chancellor, to whom Crabbe, after the rejection of his application, had addressed a severe poetical remonstrance, now requested an interview, at which he addressed him with the words, 'The first poem you sent to me, Sir, I ought to have noticed,—and I heartily forgive the second.' He at the same time requested the satirist to accept a bank note of one hundred pounds, and assured him, that when he should take orders, which, by the advice of Mr. Burke, he

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was about to do, more substantial evidences of regard should be afforded him. In the year 1781, his purpose was effected. He was ordained as a priest, and became a curate to the rector of his native village. On returning to Aldborough, under circumstances far different from those in which he left it, his reception was of a kind, which confirmed his early impressions of the character of rural life. His poetical reputation was not one, which the villagers were well calculated to appreciate; those jealousies and heartburnings, which are sure to follow the possessor of unexpected good fortune, made his residence uncomfortable; his excellent mother, to whom he not unfrequently alludes in his writings, with a tenderness and feeling, resembling those with which Pope has preserved the memory of the guardian of his early years, had sunk beneath affliction and disease; and his father had diminished the few comforts of his home by an alliance with one little calculated to repair the loss. After a brief sojourn, Mr. Crabbe accepted the place of domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland, and took up his residence at Belvoir Castle. Some circumstances are related by his biographer, which tend to show that he was not inclined to regret the separation from his patron, which took place shortly after, on the departure of the Duke to assume the post of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Just at this moment, the Lord Chancellor, after assuring him, with some of those emphatic asseverations with which his conversation was apt to be embroidered, that he was as like Fielding's Parson Adams as twelve to a dozen, presented him with two small livings. He was now united in marriage to the early friend, who had watched his progress to competency and fame through many weary years. Not long afterwards, his old friend the Lord Chancellor, at the instigation of the Duchess of Rutland, and sorely against his inclination, gave him the living of Muston, in the vicinity of Belvoir Castle. On the first suggestion of this exchange, the keeper of the royal conscience had roundly sworn, that he would make it for no man in England; but a lady was the intercessor in this instance, so that there was no infraction of the vow. Here, in 1785, he published the 'Newspaper,' a brief and not very original satire; and then sunk into a repose, compared with which the slumber of the sleepers of Ephesus was of very brief duration. It was not until the expiration of twenty-two years, that his other poems began to be issued from the press.

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This persevering silence, on the part of one, who had no reason to complain of a want of public favor, has occasioned much speculation; we think, however, that it is more easily accounted for than his subsequent reappearance. It is very obvious, from the sketch of his character given in this volume, that he had no overweening confidence in his own powers: the encouragement of Burke and Johnson, to say nothing of the pressure of severe necessity, had overborne his scruples hitherto; but that spur to effort was removed, and he had acquired a capital of fame sufficient for his wishes. Men of sensitive minds are not unfrequently less reluctant to see their stock diminishing by time, than to risk it on a doubtful venture; they follow the example of Pope's father, who retired from business in the prime of life, deposited all his property in a stout iron chest, and went on expending, until his life and fortune came to an end together. Mr. Crabbe was not one of those who look on poetry as pastime. There were various other engagements to which he more readily inclined; and he appears, also, to have been at all times scrupulous to permit nothing else to interfere with the rigorous discharge of duty. Goldsmith's beautiful description of the religious character of the priest of Sweet Auburn, would not have been inapplicable to him. He was always found at the bedside of the sick and dying; his parishioners unanimously accorded to him the touching eulogy, that 'no sympathy was like his.' During the whole period of his duties as a country clergyman, he gratuitously gave to all the benefits of his old professional skill; and his poetical reputation, great as it is, seems valueless in the comparison with that which he merits for the assiduous discharge of every moral and religious duty. Earthly fame has no rewards to offer, like those which follow him, who ministers with fidelity, however humbly, at the altar of God. Mr. Crabbe combined high intellectual gifts with an almost child-like simplicity. As a preacher, he was eloquent and impressive, and though very regardless of ceremony, entirely free from affectation. 'I must have some money, gentlemen,' was the public notice which his parishioners received of the approach of tithe day. If the evening began to fall before the conclusion of his discourse, he would remove to a pew near a window, and stand upon a bench to finish it; these were not indications of a contempt of ordinary forms, but of the forgetfulness of one, who was too sincere to be solicitous about his manner.

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We have just intimated, that Mr. Crabbe had no undue confidence in his own powers: he was at all times too ready to follow the advice of others, whose capacity and judgment were not equal to his own; and the world is probably a loser by this infirmity. Botany was always his favorite pursuit; he was scarcely ever without a flower in his hand, when the weather permitted him to go abroad; and he employed himself for some years in preparing an essay on this subject. It was written in English, and this the Vice-Master of Trinity College considered as nothing less than high treason against the majesty of the Latin tongue. This absurd suggestion discouraged him, and the work was never completed. Among his other avocations, was that of writing romances, for which he was in some respects eminently fitted; no man surpassed him in descriptive power and keen scrutiny of character, and we cannot doubt that his delineations would have been full of energy and truth. As ill fortune would have it, these too fell victims to domestic criticism. One of them was entitled 'Widow Grey,' but of this we have no memorial. A second bore the name of 'Reginald Glanshawe, or the man who commanded success.' It opened with a description of a wretched room, which his wife pronounced inferior in effect to similar descriptions in his poems; on this judicious hint, he made a bonfire of the whole. The early efforts of this lady to induce him to cultivate his poetical powers, are hardly sufficient to atone for her fatal gift of criticism in the present instance. Another sacrifice of the same kind was offered on his own account, perhaps in order to show his gratitude for the advice of his friends, by following it beyond both the spirit and the letter. This consisted of a series of poems which he had offered to Dodsley, who refused them.

We may as well say something here of Mr. Crabbe's domestic character. He was not without severe trials; for more than twenty years before her death, his wife was visited with severe disease, which seems, though her son makes little direct allusion to the subject, to have cast a partial shadow over her mind. His constant and attentive kindness to her, when kindness was almost wearied or repelled, is a beautiful trait; and the recollections of his son are full of many such amiable qualities. To the children, his approach was always a signal for delight; benevolence was in fact his distinguishing characteristic; he entered with a mild and delicate interest into the

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feelings of every one around him. Men are apt to forget, when they speak of extraordinary virtue, that they in general refer to some single act, or occasional exhibition of exalted qualities: but the virtue, after all, which passes that of martyrs, flows from a living and perennial spring, flashing ever in the sunlight of a cheerful temper, and sending its fertilizing stream through all the dark places and deserts of the way. 'I can still see him,' says his son, 'in the eye of memory,—his fatherly countenance unmixed with any of the less loveable expressions, that in too many faces obscure that character, but preëminently *fatherly*: conveying the idea of kindness, intellect and purity; his manner grave, manly and cheerful, in unison with his high and open forehead; his very attitudes, whether as he sat absorbed in the arrangement of his minerals, shells and insects,—or as he labored in his garden until his naturally pale complexion acquired a tinge of fresh healthy red; or as, coming lightly toward us with some unexpected present, his smile of indescribable benevolence spoke exultation in the foretaste of our raptures.'

It would be of little interest to dwell upon Mr. Crabbe's changes of residence, or other circumstances, which are stated with considerable minuteness by his son: we pass therefore to the period, when his long silence was broken, and he again appeared to revive and confirm the original impression of his power. In the year 1806, he had nearly completed his 'Parish Register' for publication. Several years before, Mr. Fox had promised to revise his publications, and to afford him the advantage of his critical suggestions. The career of that great man was now drawing to a close; but he readily renewed his promise, and it gives additional interest to this poem to know, that it employed his mind almost in his last hours. In 1807, it appeared, together with 'Sir Eustace Grey,' the 'Birth of Flattery,' and other poems. Three years afterwards, appeared 'The Borough;' this was succeeded in 1812 by the 'Tales in Verse,' and in 1819 by the 'Tales of the Hall,' the last of his publications.

It has been already intimated, that there is a remarkable difference between Crabbe's early poems, and those of his maturer years: both have defects and excellencies of their own; the first are far superior to the later ones in polished beauty of versification, while they are less marked by those traits, which distinguish him from most of the other poets of

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his country. The circumstances, which gave a sad and distorted coloring to his early views of life and manners, tended very strongly to impair the effect of his first productions; they excite our feelings less powerfully, because we know that the misery is partly of his own making. If a man choose the shady side of the way, he will naturally find occasion to complain of the absence of the sunbeams; but he will surely meet with little sympathy from those, who feel that there is no necessity for walking in the dark. In the long interval which elapsed before his reappearance as a writer, his circumstances had become materially altered for the better, and his views and feelings had undergone a corresponding change: he was in the enjoyment of a competent fortune; assiduously engaged in that discharge of duty, which brings with it an exceeding great reward, and possessed of some leisure to devote to that study of mankind, which can only be pursued by the contented and the tranquil. The miserable man, instead of studying others, dwells upon his own impulses and feelings, and from these infers how others think and act and feel; and there are few who do not wonder at the alterations in the aspect of the world around them, as their spirits rise or fall. Mr. Crabbe is said to have remarked, that he derived less pleasure from the contemplation of a beautiful prospect, than from standing in the highway, to watch the faces of the passers by; and the remark, we think, serves to afford an explanation of the character of his later writings. Natural beauty excites but a small share of his enthusiasm; it is rare for him to dwell on any lovely scene, though he occasionally describes those of an opposite character with great vividness: with the exception of the ocean, with which many of the associations of his childhood were connected, and whose changing aspects he portrays with remarkable force of coloring, the grand and beautiful in nature have few charms for him. Motives,—feelings,—passions,—all that relates to human character and action,—these are the points which he seizes on with a master's hand, and unfolds with a stern energy and truth, which convince us that he is engaged with no creations of fancy, but is describing what he has actually seen and studied. No English poet since the time of Shakspeare has painted those diversities of character, which one meets in the ordinary intercourse of life, with equal fidelity or with equal effect. He sees them not through a distorted medium,

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nor within the shade of intervening objects: he has attained that point of philosophical elevation, neither so lofty as to confuse the sight, nor so low as to confine it, where every object appears in a true light and in its just proportions; the results of his observation are neither things of speculation nor of fancy, but the strong, distinct, vivid portraitures of classes of our race.

Mr. Crabbe is certainly entitled to the praise of a reformer. Before his day, no poet would have dreamed of resorting to humble life for any thing beyond a theme of ludicrous caricature, or the personages of a Beggar's Opera. Even at the present time, critics are apt to shake their heads with looks of peculiar wisdom, when they come in contact with such innovations: they are willing to admit that 'The Borough' is well enough in its way, but deem the effort to invest such subjects with poetical attraction as hopeless as to draw the living waters from the rock. The poets themselves have yielded to this prejudice, and instead of copying from nature, when they wish to introduce a peasant, have made him as unlike reality, as is the waxen image to the animated frame; the man of their creation has no affinity with merely mortal flesh and blood. We might as well expect in real life to meet a phœnix, as one of their sentimental swains, musing in rapture as he goes forth to his daily task, or following the plough with unutterable joy and glory. We know that there is enough in humble life which has no claim to the title of poetical, and so there is in every other condition; but we are not sure, that the materials of poetry are not more abundant in a lowly, than in an elevated sphere; for feeling is there unfettered by those conventional restraints, which operate like law on natural freedom: the stern rebuke of opinion, which has as much power over those who move in the elevated social walks, as the eye of the keeper over the madman, loses its authority; passion walks abroad without control, and the reluctant step of the slave is exchanged for the free and elastic movements of the mountaineer. So it is with the utterance of deep emotions; the natural expression of feeling is never vulgar, and those who deem it so show only that they do not know what they condemn. When Scott, in his romances, puts the most energetic and affecting language into the mouths of his unlettered personages, he is entirely true to nature; the gipsy's stern execration of the vain and unfeeling Bertram,—the language of

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Edie Ochiltree, in the fearful night at Halket-head,—the eloquence with which the rude and generous Highland outlaw pours out the emotions of his inmost heart,—who can for a moment doubt that these are natural? On the contrary, it is nothing but their truth, which is the secret of their power; and the same simplicity and truth are the only agents, which produce the wonders attributed to Indian eloquence. The North American savage has no more literature than the meanest 'bluegown' of Scotland, and, as respects refinement, is not greatly his superior: but he gives utterance to his natural sentiments in the plainest and most unaffected language, and no conventional forms were ever half so powerful. Examples of this are familiar to the recollection of every reader; the speech of Logan has been most frequently quoted; but a more recent illustration occurs to us, which is perhaps not less striking. When the chief of the Sacs, Black Hawk, lately returned from his captivity to the tribe, which he had a few months before led forth to battle, but which was now crushed and broken, the agent of the United States expressed in council the views and expectations of the President. In the course of his reply, the warrior said: 'On your way home, you will pass where my village once was. No one lives there now. All are gone!' There is an interest connected with the Indian character, which, in the common estimation, gives more than usual force and impressiveness to their eloquence; but wherever strong feeling and manly sentiment are found, there will eloquence surely be found also; and these are peculiar to no class or condition.

It is true that the poet, who confines himself to the exhibition of humble life merely, can hardly expect a willing audience. Our interest is so much absorbed by the fortunes of the great, that it seems almost like presumption to ask it for the little; the writers of romance have been well aware of this prepossession, and have employed it for their own purposes; we see their heroes decorated with all the ornaments of rank and accomplishments and title, and bow down to them, as a matter of course. Mr. Burke says that this is natural; it certainly is second nature. Perhaps the world will in time grow wise enough to reserve that admiration for the exalted qualities of the heart and intellect, which has hitherto been lavished on adventitious ones; but that millenium has not yet begun. Undoubtedly, the distinctions which social life infallibly creates are not to be disregarded, but they may be seen

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with a more just and equal eye; the observer of human nature need not forget the high, while contemplating the lowly; but he will do well to look abroad, when the outlines of the trees and mountains are distinctly marked on the clear blue sky, and not merely when they are magnified by the gorgeous drapery of mist. When all the exhalations of prejudice and of fashion shall have passed away, the moral interest will be more equally distributed among the different conditions of life. The simple energy and truth of Crabbe will be more valued by the many, than they have been heretofore; if his intellectual vision does not, like that of the most glorious of the sons of light, comprehend all space, it will be acknowledged to be keen, wide, and faithful. Shakspeare, from his watchtower, caught every change of many-colored life; the great volume of our nature was wide open before him; and whether he unveils the humble bosom, or describes the fierce struggles of jealousy, ambition or remorse, or the sorrow quickened into madness of the credulous old king, no one ever thought of doubting that the portraiture was real. Crabbe generally aspired to no such wide extent of observation, though when he has attempted it, his success is complete; he saw and studied all the beings around him with no less interest and care, than he pursued his researches into the secrets of inanimate nature; and what he undertakes to describe, neither Scott nor Shakspeare could have painted better. His purpose is a moral one; he never aims to dazzle or to please; he conceals no defect, softens no deformity, and aims not to exaggerate a single beauty; he makes few sacrifices on the altar of fastidious taste: whoever admires him, admires him for his plain truth and manly power. In these remarks, we refer of course to his later writings; for the prevalent defect of the earlier ones has been already pointed out. As he went onward in the way of life, he became a cool, thoughtful, philosophical and somewhat sarcastic observer, with tolerable charity for human vice and folly, but with principle enough to describe them as they are.

The writings of Crabbe are not so familiar to the general reader, as to render it intrusive to attempt to illustrate our view of his poetical character by a few examples. In the 'Parish Register', he sketches the history of many of the villagers, combining tales of crime and sorrow with those of humble and unambitious virtue. There are several death-bed scenes, of which not the least curious is that of the bustling widow Goe.

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'"Bless me! I die, and not a warning given,
With *much* to do for earth, and ALL for Heaven!—
No reparation for my soul's affairs,
No leave petitioned for the barn's repairs;
Accounts perplexed, my interest yet unpaid,
My mind unsettled, and my will unmade:—
A lawyer haste, and, in your way, a priest,
And let me die in one good work, at least."
She speaks, and trembling dropped upon her knees,
Heaven in her eye, and in her hand the keys;
And still the more she found her life decay,
With greater force she grasped those signs of sway;
Then fell and died!—in haste her sons drew near
And dropped, in haste, the tributary tear,
Then from the adhering clasp the keys unbound,
And consolation for their sorrows found.'

Here is a sketch of the funeral of a very different example of her sex,—a pattern of unassuming virtue, who fell by the sudden blow of pestilence.

'Slowly they bore, with solemn step, the dead;
When grief grew loud and bitter tears were shed;
My part began; a crowd drew near the place,
Awe in each eye, alarm in every face:
So swift the ill, and of so fierce a kind,
That fear with pity mingled in each mind;
Friends with the husband came their griefs to blend,
For good-man Frankford was to all a friend.
The last-born boy they held above the bier,
He knew not grief, but cries expressed his fear.

* * * * * * *

Arrived at home, how then they gazed around,
In every place, where she, no more, was found:—
The seat at table she was wont to fill;
The fireside chair, still set, but vacant still;
The garden walks, a labor all her own;
The latticed bower, with trailing shrubs o'ergrown:
The Sunday pew she filled, with all her race,—
Each place of hers was now a sacred place,
That, while it called up sorrows in the eyes,
Pierced the full heart, and forced them still to rise.'

But these are not the strongest efforts of his pencil. At the risk of repeating what may be already quite familiar, we will give another example, which is equalled, we think, by few

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in the whole compass of English poetry. Among the poor of the Borough, we have the history of Peter Grimes, the fisherman. In his youth, he treats his father with brutal harshness, becomes familiar with debauchery and crime, and is at length shunned by all his neighbors. Two apprentices are bound to him, whose death is supposed to be hastened by his constant cruelty, if not produced by more sudden violence. He becomes a solitary being, avoiding and avoided by all, and is at last the prey of remorse and madness. He is conveyed to the poor-house, where

> 'The priest attending found he spoke at times
> As one alluding to his fears and crimes:
> "It was the fall," he muttered, "I can show
> The manner how,—I never struck a blow;"—
> And then aloud,—"unhand me, free my chain;
> On oath, he fell,—it struck him to the brain:—
> Why ask my father?—that old man will swear
> Against my life; besides, he was not there:—
> What, all agreed?—am I to die to-day?
> My Lord, in mercy, give me time to pray."'

In one of the paroxysms of delirium, he makes his fearful and mysterious revelation.

> '"Twas one hot noon, all silent, still, serene,
> *No living being I had lately seen;*
> I paddled up and down, and dipped my net,
> But such his pleasure I could nothing get—
> A father's pleasure, when his toil was done,
> To plague and torture thus an only son!
> And so I sat and looked upon the stream,
> How it ran on, and felt as in a dream:
> But dream it was not; no,—I fixed my eyes
> On the mid stream and saw the spirits rise.
> I saw my father on the water stand,
> And hold a thin pale boy in either hand,
> And there they glided ghastly on the top
> Of the salt flood, and never touched a drop;
> I would have struck them, but they knew the intent,
> And smiled upon the oar, and down they went.
> Now from that day, whenever I began
> To dip my net, there stood the hard old man,—
> He and those boys: I humbled me and prayed
> They would be gone,—they heeded not, but stayed;
> Nor could I turn, nor would the boat go by,

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But gazing on the spirits, there was I;
They bade me leap to death, but I was loath to die;
And every day, as sure as day arose,
Would those three spirits meet me at the close;
To hear and mark them daily was my doom,
And, "Come," they said, with weak, sad voices, "Come."

* * * * * * *

In one fierce summer day, when my poor brain
Was burning hot, and cruel was my pain,
Then came this father-foe, and there he stood
With his two boys again upon the flood;
There was more mischief in those eyes, more glee
In their pale faces when they glared at me;
Still did they force me on the sea to rest,
And when they saw me fainting and oppressed,
He, with his hand, the old man, scooped the flood,
And there came flame about him mixed with blood;
He bade me stoop and look upon the place,
Then flung the red hot liquor in my face;
Burning it blazed, and then I roared for pain,
I thought the demons would have turned my brain.
Still there they stood, and forced me to behold
A place of horrors,—they cannot be told,—
When the flood opened, there I heard the shriek
Of tortured guilt,—no earthly tongue can speak;
All days alike! forever! did they say,
And unremitted torments every day—
Yes, so they said;"—but here he ceased, and gazed
On all around, affrightened and amazed;
And still he tried to speak, and looked in dread
Of frightened females gathering round his bed;
Then dropped exhausted and appeared at rest,
Till the strong foe the vital powers possessed;
Then with an inward, broken voice he cried,
"Again they come," and muttered as he died.'

There is another most powerful delineation of madness in 'Sir Eustace Grey,' a brief sketch, but not inferior in power to any of Crabbe's writings. The scene is laid in a madhouse, where, in the presence of the physician and a visitor, the varying moods of madness are unveiled by the lunatic, Sir Eustace Grey himself. He describes himself as happy in the enjoyment of all earthly advantages, but forgetful of religious duty, until his wife deserted him for the arms of a treacherous friend, whom he murders under the impulse of revenge.

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Madness comes on, the offspring of disgrace and poverty; he is under the control of fiends, who torture him for years without an interval of rest; till, worn out by the very excess of his delirium, he finds tranquillity at last in the belief that his iniquities are pardoned, and that he is redeemed by his Saviour from the foul tormenting fiends. He thus relates how, in the first period of their visitation, they hurried him over sea and land to a boundless plain.

'There was I fixed, I know not how,
Condemned for years untold to stay;
Yet years were not;—one dreadful *now*
Endured no change of night or day;
The same mild evening's sleeping ray
Shone softly-solemn and serene,
And all that time I gazed away,
The setting sun's sad rays were seen.

'At length a moment's sleep stole on,—
Again came my commissioned foes;
Again through sea and land we're gone,
No peace, no respite, no repose;
Above the dark broad sea we rose,
We ran through bleak and frozen land;
I had no strength their strength t' oppose,
An infant in a giant's hand.

'They placed me where those streamers play,
Those nimble beams of brilliant light:
It would the strongest heart dismay,
To see, to feel that dreadful sight:
So swift, so pure, so cold, so bright,
They pierced my frame with icy wound,
And all that half-year's polar night,
Those dancing streamers wrapped me round.

'Slowly that darkness passed away,
When down upon the earth I fell,—
Some hurried sleep was mine by day;
But, soon as tolled the evening bell,
They forced me on, where ever dwell
Far distant men in cities fair,
Cities of which no trav'lers tell,
Nor feet but mine were wanderers there.

'Their watchmen stare, and stand aghast
As on we hurry through the dark;

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The watch-light blinks as we go past,
The watch-dog shrinks and fears to bark:
The watch-tower's bell sounds shrill;—and, hark!
The free wind blows,—we've left the town,—
A wide sepulchral ground I mark,
And on a tombstone place me down.

'What monuments of mighty dead!
What tombs of various kinds are found!
And stones erect their shadows shed
On humble graves, with wickers bound;
Some risen fresh above the ground,
Some level with the native clay;
What sleeping millions wait the sound,
"Arise, ye dead, and come away!"

'Alas! they stay not for that call;
Spare me this wo! ye demons, spare!
They come! the shrouded shadows all,—
'Tis more than mortal brain can bear:
Rustling they rise, they sternly glare
At man, upheld by vital breath,
Who, led by wicked fiends, should dare
To join the shadowy troops of death.'

We can insert hardly enough of this poem, to give any just idea of its power. His biographer tells us that it was written during a severe snow-storm; a fact, which may be of considerable importance to those, who are anxious to discover the seasons most propitious to poetical inspiration. It is far more wild and imaginative than any of his other writings, and shews a versatility of talent, which those who are acquainted only with the most familiar portions of them would scarcely have anticipated. Before we leave this subject,we are unwilling to pass by the tribute paid to his ability by Sir Walter Scott. It is interesting, no less as a full and striking testimony to his merit, by one whose favorable judgment was of no ordinary value, than as an example of the kindness and liberality of feeling of the great man, whose character is as honorable to our nature, as his writings are to the literature of his country. The following is an extract from a letter, written by him in reply to one of Crabbe, accompanying a present of a copy of the 'Parish Register.'

'Ashestiel, October 21, 1809.

'I am just honored with your letter, which gives me the more sensible pleasure, since it has gratified a wish of more than twen-

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ty years' standing. It is, I think, fully that time since I was, for great part of a very snowy winter, the inhabitant of an old house in the country, in a course of poetical study, so very like that of your admirably painted "Young Lad," that I could hardly help saying, "That's me!" when I was reading the tale to my family. Among the very few books which fell under my hands, was a volume or two of Dodsley's Annual Register, one of which contained copious extracts from "The Village," and "The Library;" particularly the conclusion of book first of the former, and an extract from the latter, beginning with the description of the old Romances. I committed them most faithfully to my memory, where your verses must have felt themselves very strangely lodged in company with ghost-stories, border-riding ballads, scraps of old plays, and all the miscellaneous stuff, which a strong appetite for reading, with neither means nor discrimination for selection, had assembled in the head of a lad of eighteen. New publications, at that time, were very rare in Edinburgh, and my means of procuring them very limited; so that, after a long search for the poems which contained these beautiful specimens, and which had afforded me so much delight, I was fain to rest contented with extracts from the Register, which I could repeat at this moment. You may, therefore, guess my sincere delight, when I saw your poems at a later period assume the rank in the public consideration which they so well deserve. It was a triumph to my own immature taste to find I had anticipated the applause of the learned and of the critical, and I became very desirous to offer my *gratulor*, among the more important plaudits which you have had from every quarter. I should certainly have availed myself of the freemasonry of authorship,—(for our trade may claim to be a mystery, as well as Abhorson's) to address to you a copy of a new poetical attempt, which I have now upon the anvil, and I esteem myself particularly obliged to Mr. Hatchard, and to your goodness acting on his information, for giving me the opportunity of paving the way for such a freedom. I am too proud of the compliments you honor me with, to affect to decline them: and with respect to the comparative view I have of my own labors and yours, I can only assure you, that none of my little folks, about the formation of whose taste and principles I may be supposed naturally solicitous, have ever read any of my own poems, while yours have been our regular evening's entertainment. My eldest girl begins to read well, and enters as well into the humor as the sentiment of your admirable descriptions of human life. As for rivalry, I think it has seldom existed among those who know, by experience, that there are much better things in the world than literary reputation, and that one of the

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best of these good things is the regard and friendship of those deservedly esteemed for their worth or their talents. I believe many *dilettanti* authors do cocker themselves up into a great jealousy of any thing that interferes with what they are pleased to call their fame: but I should as soon think of nursing one of my own fingers into a whitlow for my private amusement, as encouraging such a feeling.'

It was not until the year 1817, after the rising of the second morn on the mid-noon of his former fame, that Mr. Crabbe returned to the society of London, with which, more than thirty years before, he had been familiar in the persons of those, whose names will not perish so long as English history endures: and it is difficult to imagine what must have been his feelings, on comparing the present literary generation with his recollections of the past. He received a warm and cordial welcome in the highest intellectual and fashionable circles; Campbell, Rogers, and Moore did homage to the living patriarch of English poetry; and there were very few persons of talent and distinction, to whom he was not personally known. But these social enjoyments, however gratifying, do not seem to have elated him; it is an interesting trait in his character, that the attentions which were lavished upon him were unknown to his family, until after his death. On his return from London, he pursued his usual occupations, as if they had undergone no interruption. This volume contains several letters, written by gentlemen of high literary fame, in which the writers have embodied their recollections of him at this period. On one occasion, at the urgent invitation of Sir Walter Scott, Mr. Crabbe visited him at Edinburgh. The reader will be interested in the following extracts of a letter addressed by Mr. Lockhart to his biographer, in which several circumstances, relating to this visit, are detailed.

'London, December 26, 1833.

'I am sorry to tell you that Sir Walter Scott kept no diary during the time of your father's visit to Scotland, otherwise it would have given me pleasure to make extracts for the use of your memoirs. For myself, although it is true that, in consequence of Sir Walter's being constantly consulted about the details of every procession and festival of that busy fortnight, the pleasing task of shewing to Mr. Crabbe the usual *lions* of Edinburgh fell principally to my share, I regret to say that my memory does not supply me with many traces of his conversation. The gen-

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eral impression, however, that he left on my mind was strong, and I think, indelible; while all the mummeries and carousals of an interval, in which Edinburgh looked very unlike herself, have faded into a vague and dreamlike indistinctness, the image of your father, then first seen, but long before admired and revered in his works, remains as fresh as if the years that have now passed were but so many days. His noble forehead, his bright beaming eye, without any thing of old age about it,—though he was then, I presume, above seventy,—his sweet and, I would say, innocent smile, and the calm mellow tones of his voice,—are all reproduced the moment I open any page of his poetry; and how much better have I understood and enjoyed his poetry, since I was able thus to connect it with the living presence of the man!

'The literary persons, in company with whom I saw him the most frequently, were Sir Walter and Henry Mackenzie; and between two such thorough men of the world as they were, perhaps his *apparent* simplicity of look and manners struck me more than it might have done under different circumstances; but all three harmonized admirably together,—Mr. Crabbe's avowed ignorance about Gaels, and clans, and tartans, and every thing that was at that moment uppermost in Sir Walter's thoughts, furnishing him with a welcome apology for dilating on such topics with enthusiastic minuteness,—while your father's countenance spoke the quiet delight he felt in opening his imagination to what was really new;—and the venerable "Man of Feeling," though a fiery Highlander himself at bottom, had the satisfaction of lying by and listening until some opportunity offered of hooking in, between the links, perhaps, of some grand chain of poetical imagery, some small comic or sarcastic trait, which Sir Walter caught up, played with, and, with that art so peculiarly his own, forced into the service of the very impression it seemed meant to disturb. One evening, at Mr. Mackenzie's own house, I particularly remember among the *noctes coenaeque Deûm.*

Mr. Crabbe had, I remember, read very little about Scotland before that excursion. It appears to me that he confounded the Inchcolm of the Frith of Forth with the Icolmkill of the Hebrides: but John Kemble, I have heard, did the same. I really believe he had never known until then, that a language, radically distinct from the English, was still actually spoken within the island. And this recalls a scene of high merriment which occurred the morning after his arrival. When he came down into the breakfast parlor, Sir Walter had not yet appeared there: and Mr. Crabbe had before him two or three portly personages, all in the full Highland garb. These gentlemen, arrayed in a costume so novel, were talking in a language which he did not

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understand; so he never doubted that they were foreigners. The Celts, on their part, conceived Mr. Crabbe, dressed as he was in rather an old fashioned style of clerical propriety, with buckles in his shoes, for instance, to be some learned abbé, who had come on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Waverley; and the result was, that when, a little afterwards, Sir Walter and his family entered the room, they found your father and these worthy lairds hammering away, with pain and labor, to make themselves mutually understood, in most execrable French. Great was the relief, and potent the laughter, when the host interrupted the colloquy with his plain English "Good morning."

* * * * *

'All my friends, who had formed acquaintance with Mr. Crabbe on this occasion, appeared ever afterwards to remember him with the same feeling of affectionate respect. Sir Walter Scott and his family parted with him most reluctantly. He had been quite domesticated under their roof, and treated the young people very much as if they had been his own. His unsophisticated, simple and kind address put every body at ease with him: and indeed, one would have been too apt to forget what lurked beneath that good humored, unpretending aspect, but that every now and then he uttered some brief pithy remark, which showed how narrowly he had been scrutinizing into whatever might be said or done before him, and called us to remember, with some awe, that we were in the presence of the author of 'The Borough.'

'I recollect that he used to have a lamp and writing materials placed by his bedside every night; and when Lady Scott told him she wondered the day was not enough for authorship, he answered, "Dear Lady, I should have lost many a good hit, had I not set down, at once, things that occurred to me in my dreams."

'I could never help regretting very strongly that Mr. Crabbe did not find Sir Walter at Abbotsford, as he had expected to do. The fortnight he passed in Edinburgh was one scene of noise, glare, and bustle,—reviews, levées, banquets, and balls,—and no person could either see or hear so much of him, as might, under other circumstances, have been looked for. Sir Walter himself, I think, took only one walk with Mr. Crabbe: it was to the ruins of St. Anthony's Chapel, at the foot of Arthur's seat, which your father wished to see, as connected with part of the Heart of Mid-Lothian. I had the pleasure to accompany them on this occasion: and it was the only one on which I heard your father enter into any details of his own personal history. He told us, that during many months, when he was toiling in early life in London, he hardly ever tasted butcher's meat, except on a Sunday, when he dined usually with a tradesman's family, and

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thought their leg of mutton, baked in the pan, the perfection of luxury. The tears came into his eyes while he talked of Burke's kindness to him in his distress: and I remember he said, "The night after I delivered my letter at his house, I was in such a state of agitation, that I walked Westminster bridge backwards and forwards until daylight."'

For many years before his death, Mr. Crabbe underwent severe tortures from the *tic douloureux*, and the rapid approaches of infirmity gave warning, in the beginning of 1831, that the period of his departure was at hand. 'Mine,' says he, 'is an old man's natural infirmity, and that same old man creeps upon me more and more.' Early in February of that year, he died, after a few days of great suffering. The closing scene was marked by the same religious hope, which had shed a beautiful lustre over his useful and protracted life. He retained to the last, in the intervals of pain, that calmness and serenity, which viewed without terror the event he felt to be approaching; and he exhibited throughout that interest in others, which had bound many hearts to his. The testimonies of respect, that were freely paid to his memory by the people of his neighborhood, were of that character, which nothing but the loss of a good man would call forth, and nothing but affectionate veneration would bestow.

We ought not to omit to notice the manner, in which the life of Mr. Crabbe has been recorded by his son. He formed the plan of preparing a biography, some time previous to his father's death, and has not thought it expedient to alter that portion of it which was written in his lifetime. We think this a judicious resolution; this portion of the work is undoubtedly more animated and attractive to the reader, than it would have been had it been written in the immediate contemplation of the loss. There is little reason to fear, that the son has omitted any thing particularly worthy of remembrance; while he has certainly collected much, that would not easily have been accessible to others. On the whole, it will be regarded as a just and gratifying tribute to a man of superior genius and virtue, whose moral qualities command our veneration, while his poetical abilities will ensure him a high and permanent rank among the poets of his country.

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ART. VII.—*Helen.*

Helen: a Tale by MARIA EDGEWORTH. In two volumes. Philadelphia. 1834.

WE know not when we have been more delighted, either as reviewers or as men, with any occurrence in the literary world, than with the opportunity of giving another welcome to Miss Edgeworth, the friend of our earlier years. And yet we must confess that our pleasure was mingled with many fears; for it was possible, that the recollection of the interest her writings used to inspire, might be stronger than the reality; there was a chance too, that during her long silence she might have lost something of her power, or that the public taste, so long used to the excitement of Scott's romances, might be less disposed than formerly to relish that quiet and unassuming excellence, which distinguishes Miss Edgeworth's writings. But whatever sentiments prevailed in our minds,—whether hopes or fears,—we believe that all intelligent readers will agree with us in the acknowledgment, that the fears were uncalled for, and the hopes have been exceeded. We remember her as the morning star, whose radiance was lost for a time in the excessive brightness of the rising sun; now we see her reappearing more beautiful than ever as the planet of evening, after that sun has left the sky.

Works of this description are constantly exerting an immense power upon those who read them; and what numbers that phrase embraces in this reading age, when all who read anything are familiar with Miss Edgeworth and Scott! No one is on his guard against injurious impressions; when any one takes them up, he surrenders his mind to the excitement, and floats along like the drifting vessel, which takes no note of its bearings. He may be carried far aside from the right way, without the least suspicion that all is not well, and should he be a young reader, even if he perceive that injury has been done to his moral feelings, he may not have energy to repair it. The moral character of Scott's works is uniformly good, and that it is so, is indeed a blessing to the world. But another set of writers, such as the author of Vivian Grey, have sprung up since his decline, and have exerted a contrary influence, to

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an extent, which, considering their worthlessness in a literary point of view, is really surprising. Those who read such books are not aware perhaps of any bad effect produced upon their minds; but the simple circumstance *that they can read them,* is enough to show that injury is done. For those who take pleasure in such things are morally incapable of relishing better, and the depraved appetite grows by indulgence, till the health of the soul is irrecoverably lost. Truly, when gamesters, robbers and assassins, are served up to us as high-minded and honorable men; when the vile scandal of the day, or the history of sensuality is brought out to light, with only a thin veil of sentiment to cover its shame; when dungeons and death-beds are resorted to for narratives and scenes, which hide the defect of power in the writers, by supplying a powerful interest of their own; and when all this is received, without suspicion either of its moral purity or its intellectual pretensions, it is certain that some injury is already done. We do not suppose that such works will gain much favor with those who are truly enlightened; but it is too much to suppose that the great body of readers answer to that description.

But we have no disposition to act the part of Don Quixote at the puppet show, making an assault on works which are insignificant enough in themselves, and which are perhaps already forgotten by many of our readers. We refer to them, only by way of contrast, to show the value of a writer like Miss Edgeworth, who comes forward with authority, speaks in a voice to which all must listen, and recalls the public taste to truth and nature. We admire, most of all, the moral bearing of her writings; with a manner which is neither affected, assuming nor professional, she causes this to be felt in almost every page. The professed moral of such writings is not the thing to be most regarded; for often, where no fault can be found with the sign which the writer hangs out, scenes and descriptions are introduced, which leave no good impression. When the plays acted in this city were called 'moral lectures,' in order to evade the law, it is not probable that the morality of the performance constituted its principal attraction, nor, when a writer makes the same profession in order to conciliate the great law of public opinion, are we always sure of finding it in any part of the work after the preface or title page. The only way to determine what the actual moral is, must be to ascertain what decided impression is left upon the mind after

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reading it. If it produce a sort of kind regard for the guilty and a disposition to smile at their crimes; if it lessen the disgust which every pure mind feels for coarseness and sensuality; if it bring us into any thing like a friendly familiarity with characters whom we ought to shun, whether in actual life or poetical description, then, whatever may be the *moral* of the work, its morality will be found wanting.

Many writers feel as if all the demands of morality were answered by poetical justice, as it is called, by which is meant the retribution which, at the close of the work, makes the good prosperous, and brings the guilty to adversity and shame. But this is a rule which has nothing like it in nature; the world does not witness such an equal providence, and to make prosperity the invariable result of excellence, is to prepare many to be disappointed. But this kind of retribution is assigned by inferior hands: they think that they have done enough when they have given riches and honor to the deserving, a process which requires nothing more than a movement of the pen. The true poetical justice, the only one which answers the claims of morality, is to conciliate the respect and attachment of the reader for the deserving, and to show that the unworthy are never to be envied, whatever prosperity they may seem to enjoy. When Richardson made his Clarissa unfortunate in the closing scenes, a result which was anticipated by his readers, since the work appeared, like Gibbon's history, in volumes successive and far between, a general outcry was raised by her admirers, who thought that to marry her happily was the least that he could do; but the author judiciously stopped his ears and held fast to his original plan. The good sense of Shakspeare, in bringing Cordelia to the grave, when lengthened life would only have been 'stretching her out longer on the rack of the rough world,' has been thought so unsuitable to dramatic representation, that it has been altered by common consent; unsuited to the stage it may be, but it is not unsuited to truth and nature. In the Heart of Mid-Lothian, Scott has given rank and luxury to the less worthy sister, which he has denied to the other: in this he was right; his retribution consisting in the happiness and admiration which Jeanie secured by her virtue, while all the seeming splendor of Effie was but the gilding of her woe.

The fate of novels, which have been written as vehicles for religious influences, shows that a formal moral will not always

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give a moral impression. They have, almost without exception, been decided failures; the writers have been so entirely different in habits of thought and feeling from those whom they wished to conciliate, that all their attempts to recommend the subject have produced an effect precisely the reverse of that which they intended. Miss Edgeworth's works certainly are not what are called religious: nor do we know her sentiments in respect to the religion which we profess; she has been coarsely railed against, for her silence, by some who professed a zeal for Christianity, but has not to our knowledge explicitly avowed her opinions. Still it is certain, that the morality of her writings is the same with that which Christianity enjoins; her literary influence aids the cause of improvement, which Christians have at heart. It was beautifully said by the lamented Frisbie, that 'she has stretched forth a powerful hand to aid the impotent in virtue; and had she added, "in the name of Jesus of Nazareth," we might almost have expected miracles from her touch.' But we are not sure, that a great proportion of those whose minds she wished to reach, the English fashionable world for example, would have listened so patiently to one who avowed her purpose to instruct them, though we should certainly rejoice to be able to infer more decidedly from her expressions, that she regards Christianity as a revelation from on high. And yet, whatever her faith may be, it is but just to say that her works have done more good, than all the professedly religious novels that have been written since the creation of the world.

But while the writers of works, professedly moral, have often failed in an undertaking, which requires not merely good intentions but knowledge of the world and address, as well as intellectual power, they have been guilty only of mistake; we wish we could say as much for others, who are less easily forgiven. The former class of writers have made virtue and religion repulsive, but those to whom we allude have labored to make vice attractive and engaging: not that such was their direct object in writing; but such was the effect of their writings, and they had not sufficient respect for morality to abstain from these dishonorable arts of attraction. We are sorry to say that a great proportion of the older English novels are liable to this censure, nor can it all be excused by ascribing it to the times in which they appeared, which would account for coarseness perhaps, but must not be allowed to throw its broad mantle

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over indecent and sensual immorality. Richardson perhaps shows how far this excuse may be reasonably pleaded; indelicate enough in all conscience some of his pages are, but his aim was always to produce a moral impression. Fielding, a much greater genius, was as much beneath him in all moral respects, as he was above him in intellectual power. It was hardly to be expected that one, who led a life of vulgar dissipation in the lanes and taverns of London, and cared not what his own associates were, would be particular in the society which he introduced to his readers; and yet, strange to say, he was more decent in this respect than Smollett, who was a man of better life, and yet seemed to revel with a sort of insane delight in all the off-scouring of the world. Such writers have their reward in the change of moral feeling, which, if it tolerate them in one age, will give them up in the next; they are gradually lifted to the highest shelf of the bookcase, and those who read them as part of the national literature, can hardly open them without a feeling of shame.

By estimating the injury to the cause of good morals which such writers have done, we can form some just idea of the good which is done by Miss Edgeworth and Scott, not to speak of others who, in their various degrees, follow the same high examples. Such offenders against the moral and social law are to be found even now, and the world is disposed to pass over their transgressions somewhat too lightly. Even Dr. Johnson, moralist though he was, lent his authority to this view of the subject when he said, 'Men do not become highwaymen because Macheath is acquitted on the stage.' This however is but an ingenious evasion of the question; the true inquiry is, whether the admiration inspired by the gay bold-faced villain is not injurious to the cause of good morals. We think there is no doubt of it; for those who permit themselves to admire such characters will not be likely to form a taste for better, either in actual or imaginary life; and such admiration, though it may not make men robbers, may nevertheless influence them unhappily to a great extent, without ever bringing them to the prison or the halter. We hold it evident that such writings may do harm: and in the same proportion, we believe that Miss Edgeworth does good by substituting in their place works of greater ability and attraction, which, so far as they have any effect, shall tend to elevate and purify the mind.

So far, these works have a good effect, but we believe that

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the service works of imagination can render to the cause of virtue, is greatly overrated. Bad ones can do harm in a proportion far greater, than good ones can do good. The passive impressions which the mind receives in reading them, if they are works immoral in their bearing, can easily undermine principles of virtue, a process which requires little exertion, since, if not sustained and exercised, they are always ready to die of themselves: all this can be done in the lethargy and inaction of the soul. And were it enough to give virtuous impressions, the better sort of these works of fiction might have credit for more than can now be fairly ascribed to them. But good impressions do not make good men; neither is an aversion to bad characters sufficient to make good men: to render much to the cause of virtue it is necessary to form principles, which is more than passive impressions ever had power to do. Scott, in discussing this subject, arrives at the conclusion that novels may inspire generous sentiments, and this he considers their highest praise. But if the mind is passive in reading them, they cannot have much power even to do this; and we believe that it will be found on inquiry, that the feelings which they inspire are hollow and unsubstantial,—not such as lead to action, but such as flatter and deceive their possessor. When once they are brought to the trial, it is evidently seen, that only the moral energy of the soul and the stern discipline of real life can form principles of virtue firm enough to face the winds and storms. Yet, though we are not prepared to allow that novels can do so much good as some ascribe to them, we believe that Miss Edgeworth's exert a happier influence than any other, without a single exception; for beside the whole impression, which is always in favor of truth, good sense, and virtue, there are maxims of admirable wisdom interwoven in the texture of the work, as striking as those of De Retz, showing a profound and intimate acquaintance with the human heart. They all tend to establish the fact, that the straight and narrow way of duty, though it may sometimes be hard to travel, will sooner or later appear to be the only path of pleasantness and peace.

When we praise the moral effect of Miss Edgeworth's writings, we consider ourselves as bearing testimony not only to her good intentions, but to her ability also; for to desire to produce such an effect is one thing, and actually to produce it is another. The writer, who aims at it without success, does more harm than good, just as they who aim at wit without suc-

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ceeding, are not merely spiritless, but actually offensive. And yet to arrange the circumstances of their story, to keep light and graceful control over the movements of the characters, to regulate the suggestions, narratives, and descriptions which combine to give the moral impression, requires a comprehension which very few possess. We are told that Andrew Fairservice's horse used three legs for the purpose of progression, and flourished the fourth in the air by way of accompaniment; in this, he affords a lively illustration of the course of sundry novels, except that in them the accompaniment generally bears a greater proportion to the enginery employed in efficient action; and the truth is, that the good sense, which subdues all the elements of character and action into harmonious order, is an intellectual gift, peculiar to masters in this department of writing. Fielding possessed it without doubt; but his tastes and habits made him a painter of manners rather than of nature; Scott is the one who has displayed it in its greatest perfection; a few bold touches of his pencil set the scene and character almost visibly before our eyes; and Miss Edgeworth, though her range is not so wide, has shown almost equal gracefulness and freedom in her management of stories and characters within the circle of ordinary life, where, had she failed, almost every reader could, from his own experience, have pronounced her work unnatural, and have pointed out where and what was wanting.

We have dwelt, perhaps too long for the patience of our readers, on the moral bearing of Miss Edgeworth's writings, because, though they are admirable in every respect, this is the point in which they have rendered most service to the world. No writers of fiction, before her, ever attempted to do more than amuse an idle hour, or if any did try to convey instruction in this pleasing form, their morality was so heavy, that they often threw it overboard to save their craft from sinking; certainly the greater proportion of them have sailed in ballast so far as respected morality. Even now it is surprising to see with what impudence certain novelists insult the common sense and decency of mankind; and with what eagerness many, who might be supposed to know better, receive their accounts of English high life, their lofty sentiment and fine writing, admiring the grace and elegance which these writers add to their talent by a familiarity with the ways of the world; while the only high life which the author has ever seen, is that

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which is visible from his garret window, and his art of style consists in furnishing the reader with impressions instead of ideas,—impressions which strike the young sentimentalist as exceedingly magnificent, because, being undefined, he cannot discern their form. If such productions can find favor with any class of readers now, what would have been the state of things had Miss Edgeworth never existed? Happily these works are of a fashion which passes away. The same principle of corruption in them, by which they become so pestilential to readers, is a principle of decay to themselves; the very light that seems to play round them is phosphoric,—generated by their own dissolution, and far from being attractive to those who understand its nature, warns them that their senses will be offended if they approach too nigh. Meantime the writer, who, like Miss Edgeworth, unites fine moral taste with talent, shines with the steady brightness of a star, which, once risen, shall never more go down.

For some time after Miss Edgeworth had written with great reputation and success, it was supposed that she was under obligation to her father for his literary aid. But it would seem that he did nothing more than write an occasional preface, to introduce her the more gracefully to the notice of the world. His memoirs, written by himself, were published by his daughter after his death, and they show conclusively, that his turn of mind was such that mechanical assistance was all he would be likely to give. He seems to have been a man of active mind and restless habits, with a strong taste for mechanical inventions. We remember once meeting an insane projector, who was engaged in constructing a steam engine for eradicating the stumps of trees in newly settled countries; he remarked, that it would soon be in the hands of every backwoodsman, since, after simplifying the machinery a little, he should be able to afford it for three thousand dollars. Mr. Edgeworth's plans seem to have been of the same grotesque description,—such as a moveable treadmill, to which Dr. Johnson's remark would apply, that in ordinary cases a man moved only himself, but the great excellence of this invention was, that it required him to move himself and the machine too. Among others was a phaeton, with a single wheel like a wheelbarrow, in which something was gained in point of friction, though at considerable expense in regard to security. He also had a plan for carrying manure about his farm in a balloon, though wheth-

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er it was for the sake of easy conveyance, or of improving the article by an aëronautic expedition, does not readily appear. These however were harmless oddities, and he seems to have led an active, busy and useful life, though entirely without such habits of thought, as would have qualified him to aid his accomplished daughter to any considerable extent in her literary labors. There was evidently a strong feeling of mutual admiration existing between them: he felt himself honored by the homage which was paid to her, and she in turn ascribed all her success to his early counsels and instructions. We should be glad to forget, if we could, that her *memoirs*, when they appeared about fourteen years ago, were the subject of one of those brutal attacks, in which a certain English review has always indulged; we had supposed that the day of such iniquities was over, but we see another late outpouring from the same source upon Miss Martineau, which one would suppose might furnish a regale better suited to the Hottentot circles, than those of England.

One of the more important subjects which engaged the attention of Mr. Edgeworth, was that of early education, and he seems to have recommended to his daughter the employment of writing for the young, by which she has secured the lasting gratitude and affection of that important part of the human race. There is scarcely an intelligent child in America, who does not love her name; and this is, in our opinion, the highest honor which ambition can desire or hearts bestow. Miss Edgeworth seems to have considered her father as opening a new path in the field of education; his plan was to note down anecdotes of the child, and in that way to form an accurate knowledge of its character, so as to be able to tell the kind of discipline and influence to which it needs to be subjected. Here it is only the mechanical process which is new: it is only a more systematic way of taking those observations of the minds, habits and feelings of the young, which judicious parents and teachers have always taken for their guidance in the discharge of their trust. Neither is it probable that such incidents, as would be thought sufficiently important to deserve insertion in such a journal, would be as good indications of character as many which would be caught by the glance of an observing eye. The practice which he recommended was better suited to his daughter's purpose of writing for the young; accordingly many of the incidents in her youthful tales, and possibly some

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that seem most unlikely ever to have happened, were actual incidents, drawn from real life and preserved in a minute registry of this description. We have been assured that she made it her practice, in order to secure exact representations of the Irish, to take notes of incidents and expressions when her father was acting as a magistrate, and sometimes also to use, for the same purpose, whatever struck her as worth preserving in the intercourse of social life.

Miss Edgeworth was quite young when she began the literary career, which has been so long and brilliant. Her Essay on Self-Justification was written in 1787, and published in 1795, probably without her name, since she is generally understood to have made her first appearance in 1798, when she published the Treatise on Practical Education, in conjunction with her father. Castle Rackrent appeared in 1800, and was enough to establish her reputation as a painter of Irish nature. The incidents, which supplied the outline of the story, are believed to have been furnished by the history of her own ancestors, but the story is but a small part of its merit; the conversation in which it is told is the evidence of her talent, and probably this was never surpassed by any other describer of the Irish manners, nor by any other passages in her own writings. It is surprising to see how much can be done for his own country by a powerful writer, who opens before the eyes of the world a new vein of national character, for intelligent minds to explore. Scott has spread a rich mantle of poetical associations over all the blue hills of his native land; and he himself assures us, that it was his ambition to do for his country what Miss Edgeworth had done for her own green isle,—to introduce its natives to those of the sister kingdom in a favorable light,—which induced him to undertake that new literary enterprise, that placed him in such an enviable position before the eyes of the world, at the moment when his poetical inspiration seemed dying away.

The Moral Tales were published in 1801, with a view of furnishing to the young a kind of reading that should gratify the youthful taste, without exciting too much of the passion for fictitious narrative; we can certainly say of her, that she has come nearer to success than any other writer, but whether it be possible to indulge the taste without the danger of its becoming too engrossing, is a question not easily decided. One would have said beforehand, that the effect of Scott's

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works would be, to drive an army of worthless novels out of circulation, by making the world more fastidious in its choice; but we see, on the contrary, that the taste becomes so ravenous, that it no longer cares for selection, but devours with voracious appetite the wretched materials with which the booksellers take care to keep it supplied. We cannot speak with much decision on the subject, but we fear that the effect of Miss Edgeworth's tales for the young may have been similar to this. If so, however, it is an effect for which she is not answerable. Neither is the danger, if there be any, to be avoided in the way which has been attempted by some inferior writers,—by taking scenes, incidents and characters from real life. It is the boast of writers of religious stories, for example, that what they narrate and describe is true. Still their description is not reality; it is only the picture of reality, and there seems to be no reason why such a picture should better answer the purpose of actual experience in making one acquainted with real life, than the fancy piece which is true to nature. We are confident that Miss Edgeworth's stories have more truth in them,—more truth to fact, certainly more truth to nature, than hundreds of those which profess to describe events that have actually happened. No one can help admiring the easy and graceful way in which she manages her incidents and characters, so as to make all bear upon the great purpose of instruction,—the particular moral which she endeavors to impress. St. Pierre's Paul and Virginia is almost the only work, which compares in this respect with her writings for the young: and in that delightful tale, it may be a fault, that the philosophy which the writer had at heart is so little essential to the story, that the young reader listens with impatience when it is pointed out to him, dismisses it from his mind, and never associates it with the work again.

The Popular Tales appeared in 1804, and were intended for a class who were not much in the habit of reading. The times are wonderfully changed in the course of thirty years, and the boundary of the reading public extended further than would have been thought possible a quarter of a century ago. We do not look upon this change as approaching the miraculous; the efforts of the human mind have probably always been as great, comparatively speaking, as in the last few years, —and the taste for reading only resembles other comforts, which pass into a greater number of hands in each successive

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generation: the great difference is, that in former times the demand was not sufficient to call for a very active supply; whereas now, a thousand pens and a million presses are kept in constant motion for 'the many,' and their wants are even too much regarded if they make writers regardless of the wants and judgment of the few. Miss Edgeworth, who has always endeavored to lay the foundations of her fame in usefulness, wrote the Popular Tales for the benefit of those who were not much given to other kinds of reading, and nothing can be better than the manner in which maxims of prudence and practical good sense are illustrated and enjoined. 'Lame Jervas,' for example, shows from what small beginnings a youth may raise himself by integrity and application; 'The Will' illustrates the manner in which industry and attention secure the rewards, which genius considers as its own; 'The Manufacturers' offers a warning to those, who are meanly ambitious of rising into higher circles, where they are despised and insulted, while they might have been useful and honored among their former friends; 'Tomorrow' is a powerful representation of the effect of delay, that false dictate of a treacherous heart, which is perpetually betraying thousands into ruin and shame; and 'The Contrast,' one of the finest narratives that ever were written, shows that the effect of moral education does not depend nearly as much on chance or accidental influence, as is generally supposed. They who have rightly cultivated the minds of their children, and sown good seed in their hearts, with patient and interested care, are in general as sure of reaping the fruit of their labor, as the husbandman is of enjoying his happy harvest-home in return for his exertions in the spring.

The Fashionable Tales followed the Popular, after an interval of several years. It is evident enough that they were not written by the booksellers' instigation, for of 'The Dun,' and 'Ennui,' which appeared together in 1809, the former was written in 1802, and the latter two years later,—five years before it was given to the world. The story of Lord Glenthorn is one of deep interest and attraction; the discovery which deprives him of his rank and title, and the moral energy by which he clears out a path for himself to prosperity and fame, are doubtless exceedingly improbable events; but so skilfully is the story managed, that the reader takes no notice of the circumstance till it is pointed out by the critic, who, in this case as in many others, receives slender thanks for his endeavors to

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enlighten the public mind. Of all the Fashionable Tales, 'Vivian' inspires the most profound interest and makes the deepest moral impression. The weakness of heart, which makes a man faithless to himself, or, to use an expressive phrase, 'his own worst enemy,'—which impels him to act without any just discernment of the consequences of his actions,—which puts him in the power of those, who are immeasurably beneath him in intellectual ability and moral feeling,—all the effects of this helplessness are represented, in that fine story, with a fearful strength of portraiture which no one can easily forget.

Among the Tales of Fashionable Life, was 'The Absentee,' a work well known for its admirable sketches of Irish character, and the patriotism, with which Miss Edgeworth endeavored to impress upon the owners of estates in that country, a sense of their duty in regard to their tenants. If we might credit some of the English politicians, it is the duty of the landlord to leave these dependants at the mercy of his agent, and to go, much against his will no doubt, to spend his income among strangers, this being the way in which he can best serve the interests of his country. Others, who take a more philosophical view of the subject, relieve the absentees from censure, by showing that it is the order of Providence which brings wretchedness and famine upon Ireland, and that the people are themselves to blame for coming into an over-crowded world. But those most interested in the subject have never been quite satisfied with these ingenious theories, and have of late begun to think it reasonable, that all who hold power over men shall be responsible to men for the use of that power,—a maxim, which may perhaps occasion some inconvenience to the great, but which will tend in a far greater proportion to secure the comfort and happiness of the small. The representative of a noble Irish family, miserably ambitious of being ridiculed and despised in London, in preference to being useful and honored at home,—the high-minded son, who feels the humiliation of the position in which he stands, and resolves to restore his parents to their country,—the beautiful cousin, Grace Nugent, perhaps the loveliest female portrait ever drawn,—these and the Irish characters at home and abroad, with all their originality of oddity and humor, have made this work a favorite with the public; its popularity is greater than that of any of her writings, unless perhaps we except the very last.

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'Belinda,' which was written in 1800, made a considerable sensation when it first appeared. It had not the recommendation of the Irish character and humor, in which she excels; but the description of English life was striking and animated,—even too much so to suit the taste of English critics, who fell upon her with great fury, and abused her for misrepresenting their fashionable world. The spirited sketch of Lady Delacour gave particular offence, but if we mistake not, the most offensive passages in that lady's history were taken from real life; such for example was the duel which she fought with another female politician; it has always been understood, that a celebrated Duchess gave Mr. Fox an equally convincing proof of her devotion to his party. The part of this novel, which would generally be condemned as most improbable, we mean Clarence Hervey's attempt to educate a wife, was taken from the reality in substance, though some romance is superadded to the truth. Day, the author of Sandford and Merton, a man of large fortune and still more abundant eccentricity, actually selected two girls from the Foundling Hospital, intending to educate them in innocence and ignorance, apart from the corrupting influence of the world. One of them was soon dismissed for want of talent, but she married a respectable tradesman, and had talent enough to make an excellent wife and mother. The other might have answered the purpose, being handsome, intelligent, and ready to receive instruction, but unfortunately her patron was disgusted with the sleeves of a gown which she happened to wear, and in consequence her chance of promotion was lost. After solemn consideration, he determined in his own mind, that he never could be happy with one who had given so signal a proof of her want of strength of mind, and therefore abandoned her forever. The result of the experiment, as described in the novel, has often been criticised as extremely improbable; whether falling in love with a picture, or renouncing a loved one on account of her sleeves, be the more unlikely event, must be determined by those who are better versed than reviewers in matters of the heart.

'Patronage' appeared in 1813, and never was so fortunate as its predecessors in gaining public applause. Not that it does not give evidence of as much talent as any which went before it, nor because its scenes and characters are inferior to any of theirs; the only difficulty seemed to be in the wide reach of the subject; it contained such a variety of interest and adventure,

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that there was a want of singleness in its impression, though all are made to bear upon the subject with considerable skill. The abundance of the author's materials perhaps embarrassed her a little, and this was the explanation of that want of unity of which so many complained. The letters of the sons of Mr. Percy, giving the particulars of their professional success, were thought by some to weigh heavily upon the story: such is not our opinion; but much impertinent criticism on this subject was addressed even to the author herself, who admitted its justice, though in a tone rather expressive of modesty than conviction. Her Lord Oldborough was one of those imposing characters, that at first sight make an impression, which the second reading does not confirm; he is too statue-like and unbending, savoring more of the days of Lord Chatham, who would not allow his secretaries to sit in his presence, than of these later times, when great men have lost a part of their reverence as well as power.

But without saying more of works which are familiar to all our readers, we will only remark that Helen, while it is equal in excellence to her best, bears little resemblance to her other writings. It is too common with those who begin to write again after long silence, to copy the manner which proved successful on former occasions; the consciousness that a high reputation is to be maintained or lost in the new adventure, often deprives the writer of courage, and he feels that he shall be satisfied, if he do not fall below his former standard. The same timidity often makes him serve up old incidents and characters in new forms, while the reader, instead of being glad to meet his old acquaintance again, is vexed to see them endeavoring to hide their respectable antiquity under a youthful dress. Miss Edgeworth has not been betrayed into this error; feeling sure that she possessed all her early strength, she has written with calm confidence, and has proved to the satisfaction of the world, that the light within has not grown pale with age.

Miss Edgeworth's object in writing Helen, was to inspire a reverence for the truth, and to show the evils which inevitably result from its violation. The common expressions of good feeling, in social life, usually convey more than is felt by those who use them: and the habit of exceeding the exact truth, thus formed, is very easily carried into more important matters, under the impression, that if it be right to exceed the truth in

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the polite intercourse of society, it is still more excusable when the object is to give pleasure or avoid giving pain. There are many cases in which it requires great moral energy to speak the truth, while it seems as if no harm would come from suppressing it: and unless the moral principle be deep and strong, the truth will be violated without the conscience being alarmed or offended. To a great proportion of mankind, selfishness seems to constitute all the sin of falsehood, and so long as they have no selfish object to gain,—still more when they do it to serve a friend or to spare his feelings,—they do not feel as if they had done any thing which the sternest moralist need condemn. But as white lies lead on to those of a darker color, and the conscience, which has tolerated one, cannot easily take offence at another, there is danger in the least indulgence; on this account Dr. Johnson said that he would punish a child, for saying that a thing happened at one window, when it actually happened at another; because indifference to truth is the prevailing cause of falsehood; while to those who reverence the truth, no circumstances can excuse the violation of it; no temptation, no palliating reason, no benevolent intention can make the transgression light.

The heroine of the story is Helen Stanley, an orphan, educated by her uncle, a Dean of the English church, and a man of taste and fortune, who, two years before the period when the history opens, had resided with her in Florence, where they were intimate with Lord and Lady Davenant and their daughter Lady Cecilia; shortly after the Dean returned with his niece to England, he died, having exhausted his fortune by his expensive luxuries, and leaving no inheritance to his niece, but a sum of money which he had settled upon her before his affairs became disordered. She insists upon appropriating this money to the payment of his debts, in order to remove all reproach from his memory, though the sacrifice leaves her with but slender means of support.

Her former friends, the Davenants and their daughter, who meantime has married General Clarendon, retain their attachment to Helen under her altered circumstances. She is at once invited to make Clarendon Park her home, as lady Cecilia tells her, 'by the express desire of her husband.' But lady Cecilia, lovely and amiable though she was, had never learned to reverence the truth, and though she would have scorned a selfish falsehood, would sometimes rose-color her

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representations, either for the sake of giving pleasure or to avoid giving pain. In the present case, she had given her husband to understand, that Helen had formerly promised to reside with her when she was married, and she represented to Helen, that the arrangement was made by her husband's desire; whereas the fact was, that the General desired the company of his sister, Esther Clarendon, a lady who was both excellent and disagreeable, not discriminating between sincerity, and what Addison calls 'the silly affectation of speaking one's mind.' In this case as in all others, the truth would not only have been much better, but would have answered her immediate purpose much better; Helen finds the General perfectly polite, but somewhat stately; and for a time, she is perplexed to reconcile his manner with the account which lady Cecilia had given. At length she becomes convinced. that she was a resident in the house against the will of its master; and shocked at the idea, she is on the point of retreating at once, without regarding the consequences; but fortified by the counsels of lady Davenant, she resolves to do nothing hastily; till one day, when it becomes necessary to determine her plans for the future, she begs leave to speak with the General, and asks it as a favor that he will deal plainly with her, and tell whether she was not holding the place in his family which another might more properly have filled. Had there been the least want of singleness of heart in our heroine on this occasion, the application would have been indelicate; but the manner of openness and truth cannot be misunderstood; he was struck at once with the conviction, that she was better suited than his sister, to be a companion to Lady Cecilia, having the same truth and moral courage, without that bluntness of manner, which sometimes makes a virtue even to the virtuous almost as repulsive as a sin. The scene between them on this occasion is beautiful and affecting, and entirely removes the coldness, which was owing solely to lady Cecilia's suppression of the truth. But all difficulties which originated in that source were not so easily mastered. The General, from particular circumstances, had resolved that he never would marry a woman who had loved another,—one of those resolutions which men often form, and keep till they find inducement enough to break them. Lady Cecilia, knowing this prejudice, had carefully concealed from him that she once flirted and even corresponded, when in Florence, with a man of pleasure,

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one Col. D'Aubigny; no harm could have arisen from disclosing it, but still it was concealed. When this man's name was once accidentally mentioned, Helen happened to blush, though not for herself, and Lady Cecilia, with that meanness, which seems forced on those who suppress the truth, suffered her friend to lie under the suspicion of having been once attached to the worthless libertine, who never had the least interest in her heart. Lady Cecilia did not imagine that Helen could be injured by such a suspicion; she loved her friend very sincerely; but having once concealed the truth from her husband, she was afterwards afraid to disclose it: what was at first a weakness on her part, became a selfish and ungenerous willingness to sacrifice her friend. Truly does Irving say that one truth concealed, like a dollar in the vaults of a bank, has a dozen paper representatives; so it proved on this occasion; and the consequence was, that the place which seemed to offer so pleasant a home to Helen, soon became to her little better than a house of suffering and bondage.

Lady Davenant is the person who calls forth most of Miss Edgeworth's power. In her youth, she was romantic in the best sense of the word, and gave her heart to one whom her imagination exalted above the mortal standard; but at the time when he was engaging her affections, he had given his heart to another. When she discovered this, she released him at once from his engagements, without a word of upbraiding; and the plan for her happiness, which her mother had so injudiciously formed, had almost become the means of breaking her heart. Instead, however, of avenging upon all others the unfaithfulness of one, she forced herself into society, and new admirers came,—among them Lord Davenant, to whom she revealed the state of her heart, but who nevertheless persevered in his endeavors to gain all the affection she was able to give. Lord Davenant was at that time a younger son, without title or fortune; it was not till afterwards, that the death of his brothers threw rank and wealth into his hands.

When the effect of her first passion had subsided, she became ambitious; at first she wished to distinguish herself by the power of conversation, in which Madame de Staël thinks that English ladies, without exception, are wanting; in this she succeeded, and was ridiculed and admired, till one of her friends had the courage to warn her of the affectation in which she was indulging, and she had good sense enough to take the

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suggestion as kindly as it was intended. But political ambition remained; Lord Davenant was a man of talent, but somewhat careless of influence and applause; she took advantage of his place as minister to ask favors for some of her acquaintance, and thus gave the impression that she exerted considerable power. While thus engrossed with public matters, she was less mindful of her duties as a mother; and the consequence of her leaving her daughter to the care of others was, that lady Cecilia acquired that habit which afterwards involved her in so much suffering and shame. Nor was her influence with her husband always well exerted. Her mother, having exhausted her means in expensive luxuries, persuaded lady Davenant to ask a pension for her from her husband; he could not grant it for such a purpose, and to such a person, without dishonor; still, having once asked it, she persevered, till her unreasonableness had well nigh separated them forever. Meantime he granted the desired favor from his own private fortune, and his wife forgot her disappointment in admiration of his firm virtue, and shame for her own unworthy application. The effect of all this experience was, to make her character firm, dignified and commanding; she never disguised from herself her own faults and errors, but saw and acknowledged them precisely as they were, and welcomed the lesson she had learned at whatever expense of feeling: we know not where the process, by which real character is formed, can be found traced by an abler hand.

About this time, Granville Beauclerc, General Clarendon's ward, appears upon the stage. Lady Cecilia, by certain suggestions, had contrived to give Helen such an embarrassment in his company, as deprived her of all presence of mind. She was very desirous that they should be agreeable to each other; and, in order to remove Helen's blushes, told her a story, for which she herself might have blushed,—that Beauclerc was soon to be married to another. The consequence of this idle falsehood was, that she, thrown daily into his society, lost her heart before she was aware of it; he became equally attached to her; but when he declares his passion in the incoherent language appropriated to such occasions, she entirely misunderstands him, and he, believing himself rejected, at once takes his flight from the country. Had Lady Cecilia even then told the truth to her husband, his flight might have been arrested; but she could not persuade herself to do this; she found it

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easier to leave him under the impression, that Helen had acted a coquettish and unworthy part; the consequence was, that her friend began to decline in the General's esteem, he being a man who esteemed openness one of the most sacred of duties, and insincerity one of the basest of crimes. It was only by writing herself to Beauclerc, and confessing what false impressions she had given, that Lady Cecilia could recall him at last.

Thus far Helen was not to blame; but now, Lady Cecilia takes the fancy that they shall always dress alike. Helen had it still in her power to withhold her uncle's legacy from the sacred purpose for which she had set it apart; without this, her means were very slender; but she had not sufficient strength of mind to resist her friend's solicitations, who made her compliance in this respect a test of affection. It was not long before she had involved herself deeply in debt, for articles of luxury which she neither wanted nor valued. But in her perplexity, which was sufficiently alarming, she retained her openness, and though dissuaded by Lady Cecilia, went at once to Lady Davenant and confessed the extravagance of which she had been guilty, declaring her purpose at the same time to sacrifice every thing rather than touch the legacy of her uncle. Unmoved, except to tears by the cold severity of her friend, Helen went through with her confession, and the result was, that her confidence retrieved her circumstances and secured the affection of her friend, where a suppression of the truth would have involved the one past all recovery, and alienated the regard of the other.

These were but the beginning of troubles. Lady Davenant was obliged to go with her husband on a foreign embassy, and, being aware of the fatal defect in her daughter's character, she was rejoiced to leave her with such a companion as Helen, in whose integrity she reposed unbounded confidence. Nor was it unworthily bestowed. But Helen was young, and Cecilia, though she had this failing, was her warm-hearted and affectionate friend. The danger was, that when an appeal was made to her affection, Helen would not have firmness to resist it, and so it proved. Certain letters, which Lady Cecilia had formerly written to Col. D'Aubigny, were forwarded with no good intention to General Clarendon, and his wife accidentally discovered the contents of the packet before it came under his hand. The discovery filled her with dismay; but instead of confessing the truth to him, she could think of no resource,

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but to persuade Helen to receive the packet as her own. Their handwriting was similar,—the letters were signed with a fancy name, and if Helen could be induced to enter into this conspiracy, all might be well. The plan was proposed to Helen; every kind of solicitation was tried, and among other things, it was urged that, in Lady Davenant's state of health, the shock of a discovery might be fatal. Dreadful as it was to lend even silent aid to a wife in an attempt to deceive her husband, Helen in an evil hour consented, on receiving a promise from Cecilia, that as soon as Lady Davenant was gone, she would disclose all to her husband. That promise was never redeemed. The scene, where Helen claims the fulfilment of the promise, is so characteristic and forcible, that we are tempted to extract it, though it is rather long for our purpose.

'"Your mother is safe now, Cecilia."

"Oh yes, and thank you, thank you for that——"

"Then, now, Cecilia—your promise."

"My promise!" Lady Cecilia's eyes opened in unfeigned astonishment. "What promise?—Oh, I recollect, I promised—did I?"

"My dear Cecilia, surely you cannot have forgotten."

"How was it?"

"You know the reason I consented was to prevent the danger of any shock to Lady Davenant."

"Well, I know, but what did I promise?"

The words had in reality passed Lady Cecilia's lips at the time without her at all considering them as a promise, only as a means of persuasion to bring Helen to her point.

"What *did* I promise?" repeated she.

"You said, 'As soon as my mother is safe, as soon as she is gone, I will tell my husband all,'—Cecilia, you cannot forget what you promised."

"Oh no, now I remember it perfectly, but I did not mean so soon. I never imagined you would claim it so soon; but some time I certainly will tell him all."

"Do not put it off, dearest Cecilia. It must be done—let it be done to-day."

"To-day!" Lady Cecilia almost screamed.

"I will tell you why," said Helen.

"To-day!" repeated Lady Cecilia.

"If we let the present *now* pass," continued Helen, "we shall lose both the power and the opportunity, believe me."

"I have not the power, Helen, and I do not know what you mean by the opportunity," said Cecilia.

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"We have a reason now to give General Clarendon—a true ood reason, for what we have done."

"Reason!" cried Lady Cecilia, "what can you mean?"

"That it was to prevent danger to your mother, and now she is safe; and if you tell him directly, he will see this was really so."

"That is true, but I cannot—wait till to-morrow, at least."

"Every day will make it more difficult. The deception will be greater and less pardonable. If we delay, it will become deliberate falsehood, a sort of conspiracy between us," said Helen.

"Conspiracy! Oh, Helen, do not use such a shocking word, when it is really nothing at all."

"Then why not tell it?" urged Helen.

"Because, though it is nothing at all in reality, yet Clarendon would think it dreadful—though I have done nothing really wrong."

"So I say—so I know," cried Helen; "therefore——"

"Therefore let me take my own time," said Cecilia. "How can you urge me so, hurrying me so terribly, and when I am but just recovered from one misery, and when you had made me so happy, and when I was thanking you with all my heart!" said Cecilia.

Helen was much moved, but answered as steadily as she could "It seems cruel, but, indeed, I am not cruel."

"When you had raised me up," continued Cecilia, "to dash me down again, and leave me worse than ever!"

"Not worse—no, surely not worse, when your mother is safe."

"Yes, safe, thank you—but oh, Helen, have you no feeling for your own Cecilia?"

"The greatest," answered Helen, and her tears said the rest.

"You, Helen! I never could have thought you would have urged me so!"

"O, Cecilia! if you knew the pain it was to me to make you unhappy again,—but I assure you it is for your own sake. Dearest Cecilia, let me tell you all that General Clarendon said about it, and then you will know my reasons." She repeated as quickly as she could all that had passed between her and the General, and when she came to this declaration that, if Cecilia had told him plainly the fact before, he would have married with perfect confidence, and, as he believed, with increased esteem and love, Cecilia started up from the sofa on which she had thrown herself, and exclaimed,

"O that I had but known this at the time, and I *would* have told him."

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"It is still time," said Helen.

"Time now?—impossible. His look this morning. Oh! thet look!"

"But what is one look, my dear Cecilia, compared with a whole life of confidence and happiness?"

"A life of happiness! never, never for me, in that way, at least, never."

"In that way and no other, Cecilia, believe me. I am certain you never could endure to go on concealing this, living with him you love so, yet deceiving him."

"Deceiving!—do not call it deceiving, it is only suppressing a fact that would give him pain; and when he can have no suspicion, why give him that pain? I am afraid of nothing now but this timidity of yours—this going back. Just before you came in, Clarendon was saying how much he admired your truth and candor, how much he is obliged to you for saving him from endless misery; he said so to me, that was what made me so completely happy. I saw that it was all right for you as well as me, that you had not sunk, that you had risen in his esteem."

"But I must sink, Cecilia, in his esteem, and now it hangs upon a single point—upon my doing what I cannot do."

Then she repeated what the General had said about that perfect openness, which he was sure there would be in this case between her and Beauclerc. "You see what the General expects that I should do."

"Yes," said Cecilia, and then indeed she looked much disturbed. "I am very sorry that this notion of your telling Beauclerc came into Clarendon's head—very, very sorry, for he will not forget it. And yet, after all," continued she, "he will never ask you point blank, 'Have you told Beauclerc?'—and still more impossible that he should ask Beauclerc about it."

"Cecilia!" said Helen, "If it were only for myself, I would say no more; there is nothing I would not endure—that I would not sacrifice—even my utmost happiness."—She stopped, and blushed deeply.

"Oh my dearest Helen! do you think I could let you ever hazard that? If I thought there was the least chance of injuring you with Granville!—I would do any thing—I would throw myself at Clarendon's feet this instant."

"This instant—I wish he was here," cried Helen.

"Good heavens! do you?" cried Lady Cecilia, looking at the door with terror—she thought she heard his step.

"Yes, if you would but tell him—O let me call him!"

"Oh no, no! Spare me—spare me, I cannot speak now. I could not utter the words; I should not know what words to use. Tell him if you will, I cannot."

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"May I tell him?" said Helen, eagerly.

"No, no—that would be worse; if any body tells him it must be myself."

"Then you will now—when he comes in?"

"He is coming!" cried Cecilia.

General Clarendon came to the door—it was bolted.

"In a few minutes," said Helen. Lady Cecilia did not speak, but listened, as in agony, to his receding footsteps.

"In a few minutes, Helen, did you say?—then there is nothing for me now, but to die—I wish I could—I wish I was dead."

Helen felt she was cruel, she began to doubt her own motives; she thought she had been selfish in urging Cecilia too strongly, and going to her kindly, she said,

"Take your own time, my dear Cecilia; only tell him—tell him soon."

"I will, I will indeed, when I can—but now I am quite exhausted."

"You are indeed," said Helen, "how cruel I have been!—how pale you are!"

Lady Cecilia lay down on the sofa, and Helen covered her with a soft India shawl, trembling so much herself that she could hardly stand.

"Thank you, thank you, dear, kind Helen; tell him I am going to sleep, and I am sure I hope I shall."

Helen closed the shutters—she had now done all she could; she feared she had done too much, and as she left the room, she said to herself,—"Oh, Lady Davenant! if you could see—if you knew—what it cost me!" '

The natural consequence of all this was, that the General considered Helen as acting dishonorably, in not confessing her correspondence with Col. D'Aubigny to Beauclerc, who was now her professed and accepted lover. Her predicament was painful; but, fettered as she was by her engagement to Cecilia, she could only throw herself on his generosity. She did it at once, with a manner that inspired the most perfect confidence; she confessed to him that there was a mystery which she was not at liberty to explain, and begged him to trust her integrity till the time for explanation should come. He at once avows, in the most generous language, his perfect faith in her, and declares that no unworthy jealousy shall ever alienate his affection. Still the relation in which they were placed was extremely delicate; and it is one great proof of Miss Edgeworth's talent, that she is able to inspire so much

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regard for Lady Cecilia, who is deeply interesting to every reader, though all detest the folly by which she sacrifices her friends to her own fancied security. This may strike some as a failure on the part of the moralist; it appears to us in a different light; it is the very soul of Christian morality, to pity the offender, while it condemns his crimes.

Helen was so confident that she had acted with good intentions, that she hardly confessed to herself that she was accessary to an imposture,—that she was aiding a wife to deceive a noble-minded and confiding husband. Her perplexities, great as they were, did not trouble her so much as might have been supposed; for she did not realize to its full extent the fact, that no peace,—no reconciliation,—no prosperity can endure, except it be founded in truth.

We have no room to describe the difficulties into which this wretched stratagem of Lady Cecilia led. Lady Davenant was in Russia, in miserable health, and Helen could only take counsel of her own heart: she felt all the embarrassment which tortures an ingenuous mind, at the thought of being accessary to imposture; she felt that she was under the stern eye of perpetual disapprobation, whenever she met the General, and much as she loved Cecilia, Helen could not disguise from herself, that her conduct throughout was treacherous and unworthy. When the family went to London, instead of being able to lose the consciousness of wrong in the pleasures of social life, they were met by a paragraph in the papers, which announced that Col. D'Aubigny's memoirs were to be published, together with his correspondence with certain ladies of fashion; and so pointed an allusion was made to Helen, as one of those who had encouraged his attentions, that she attracted a sort of observation which it was very difficult to endure. The publication had been got up between some booksellers and certain venomous scandal-mongers in high life; the brother of the Colonel had furnished the letters, and passages had been inserted to make them more discreditable, particularly in those of Lady Cecilia, which of themselves were before quite too affectionate for the occasion. Those concerned in preparing the work had, for reasons which it is needless to mention, taken a bitter spite to Helen, and by the use of these letters, which they ascribed to her, together with additions of their own, they thought themselves sure of destroying her reputation and breaking off her marriage. The General by private contract

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puts a stop to the publication, but takes a copy to Helen, desiring her to mark the parts which she had written. Helen carries this to Cecilia, who promises to mark them with the utmost exactness, but is not faithful; the General compares the work, as marked, with copies of the correspondence which had fallen into his hands, ascertains that Helen had not marked them faithfully, and thus she is again presented to him as guilty of a deliberate falsehood. He had engaged to give her away at the marriage, but now he declares that nothing should induce him to sanction such an union.

It was but natural that the friend, for whom she had sacrificed all this, should grow cold; no sacrifices, made at the expense of principle, ever can ensure lasting gratitude, however generously made, however kindly intended. But this is not the worst; Beauclerc, having engaged in a duel with Horace Churchill, a man of the world, who had imprudently made himself responsible for the publication in which he had little share, wounds him desperately, and is obliged to fly from the country. A note from the General to Helen, announcing his determination with respect to the wedding, and giving the reasons for his change of purpose, makes Helen profoundly sensible of the degraded position in which she stands, both in his eyes and those of others. She has not lost her self-respect, and she writes a letter to him, declaring that she can no longer enjoy his hospitality, and another to Beauclerc, in which she tells him, that without any change of feeling on her part, the force of circumstances which she cannot explain, must separate them forever. Her plan was, to reside with an old housekeeper of her uncle, but Miss Clarendon, who happened to be in London, and who, in her direct way, soon satisfied herself of the real state of the case, persuaded her to accompany her into Wales, where the intelligence of the duel and the agitation of mind through which she had passed, brought her almost to the grave. Miss Clarendon is a good example of those characters, who are sometimes found in the world, who take pride in their own sincerity, till they learn to pay too little regard to the feelings of others; they do not know that sincerity is one thing, and bluntness quite another; and they do an injury to the cause of virtue, by associating a fine attribute of character with a roughness not necessarily connected with it, which inspires anger and aversion.

The later scenes, in which the mysteries of the story are de-

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veloped, have a thrilling interest which Miss Edgeworth has never exceeded. Scenes of the exciting kind have not much abounded in her former writings; certainly there is nothing in them, which rivals the closing passages of this. When Helen is recalled to London to meet Lady Davenant, who is expected home from Russia, the first person she sees is Lady Cecilia, who had not even taken leave of her when she went away. We give the scene in the author's own words.

'When they were within the last stage of London, the carriage suddenly stopped, and Helen, who was sitting far back, deep in her endless reverie, started forward—Cockburn was at the carriage door.

"My lady, coming to meet you, Miss Stanley."

It was Cecilia herself. But Cecilia, so changed in her whole appearance, that Helen would scarcely have known her. She was so much struck that she hardly knew what was said: but the carriage doors were opened, and Lady Cecilia was beside her, and Cockburn shut the door without permitting one moment's delay, and on they drove.

Lady Cecilia was excessively agitated. Helen had not power to utter a word, and was glad that Cecilia went on speaking very fast; though she spoke without appearing to know well what she was saying: of Helen's goodness in coming so quickly, of her fears that she would never have been in time—"but she was in time,—her mother had not yet arrived. Clarendon had gone to meet her on the road, she believed—she was not quite certain."

That seemed very extraordinary to Helen. "Not quite certain?" said she.

"No, I am not," replied Cecilia, and she colored; her very pale cheek flushed; but she explained not at all, she left that subject, and spoke of the friends Helen had left at Llansillen—then suddenly of her mother's return—her hopes—her fears—and then, without going on to the natural idea of seeing her mother, and of how soon they should see her, began to talk of Beauclerc—of Mr. Churchill's being quite out of danger—of the General's expectation of Beauclerc's immediate return. "And then, my dearest Helen," said she, "all will be——"

"Oh! I do not know how it will be!" cried she, her tone changing suddenly; and, from the breathless hurry in which she had been running on, sinking at once to a low broken tone, and speaking very slowly. "I cannot tell what will become of any of us. We can never be happy again—any one of us. And it is all my doing—and I cannot die. Oh! Helen, when I tell you——"

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She stopped, and Miss Clarendon's warning counsel, all her own past experience, were full in Helen's mind, and, after a moment's silence, she stopped Cecilia, just as she seemed to have gathered power to speak, and begged that she would not tell her any thing that was to be kept secret. She could not, would not hear any secrets: she turned her head aside, and let down the glass, and looked out, as if determined not to be compelled to receive this confidence.

"Have you then lost all interest, all affection for me, Helen? I deserve it!—But you need not fear me now, Helen: I have done with deception, would to Heaven I had never begun with it!"

It was the tone and look of truth—she steadily fixed her eyes upon Helen—and instead of the bright beams that used to play in those eyes, there was now a dark deep-seated sorrow, almost despair.

Helen was deeply moved: it was indeed impossible for her, it would have been impossible for any one who had any feeling, to have looked upon Lady Cecilia Clarendon at that moment, and to have recollected what she had so lately been, without pity. The friend of her childhood looked upon her with all the poignant anguish of compassion—

"Oh, my dear Cecilia! how changed!"

Helen was not sensible that she uttered the words "how changed!"

"Changed! yes! I believe I am," said Lady Cecilia, in a calm voice, "very much changed in appearance, but much more in reality; my mind is more altered than my person.

"Oh! Helen! if you could see into my mind at this moment, and know how completely it is changed;—but it is all in vain now! You have suffered, and suffered for me! but your sufferings could not equal mine. You lost love and happiness, but still conscious of deserving both: I had both at my command, and I could enjoy neither under the consciousness, the torture of remorse."

Helen threw her arms round her, and exclaimed, "Do not think of me!—all will be well—since you have resolved on the truth, all will yet be well."

Cecilia sighed deeply and went on.—"I am sure, Helen, you were surprised that my child was born alive. At least I was. I believe its mother had not feeling enough to endanger its existence. Well, Clarendon has that comfort at all events, and as a boy, it will never put him in mind of his mother."

"Well, Helen, I had hopes of myself to the last minute; I really and truly hoped, as I told you, that I should have had

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courage to tell him all when I put the child into his arms. But his joy!—I could not dash his joy—I could not!—and then I thought I never could. I knew you would give me up; I gave up all hope of myself. I was very unhappy, and Clarendon thought I was very ill; and I acknowledged that I was anxious about you, and let all the blame fall on you, innocent, generous creature!—I heard my husband perpetually upbraiding you when he saw me ill—all, he said, the consequences of your falsehood —and all the time I knew it was my own.'

Then came the full force of sorrow and shame, which her wretched expedients had only delayed, not prevented. Her husband lost his confidence in her; and by the consequences of her artifice, she was led on to acts, which were soon detected and which changed his affection into disdain. He is represented throughout as a man of high and honorable feelings, but inflexible in his purpose, and unbounded in his abhorrence of every thing like disguise. It may easily be imagined how such a person would feel, when he discovered that the woman, to whom he had given his heart without reserve, was no longer worthy of respect or love. Her unhappiness drove her to degrading resources: she went into society, to escape the dreary solitude of home, and when she returned from her dissipation, made false excuses for being late; she involved herself in debt at the card table, and asked money of her husband under false pretences, which were easily seen through,—she was found associating with persons, whose society he thought disreputable, not that she sought such company, but she was drawn into it by her former stratagems; this too he discovers, and he does not conceal from her, that the last vestige of affection for her is gone from his heart.

They remained in a state of alienation till the time we have mentioned, when Lady Davenant returned and Helen went to London to meet her. When Helen met with her former friend, she found her greatly altered with remorse and sickness of heart. There was no mistaking the sincerity of her confession; it appeared by the test given in Moore's beautiful line, 'Hadst thou been a false one, thy cheek had been less pale;' false indeed she had been, but all was thoroughly altered. When Lady Davenant returned,

'A servant, who had been watching at the hall-door, came in —"The carriage, my lady! Lady Davenant is coming."

Lady Cecilia started up; they ran down stairs; the carriage

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stopped, and in the imperfect light they saw the figure of Lady Davenant, scarcely altered, leaning upon General Clarendon's arm. The first sound of her voice was feebler, softer, than formerly—quite tender, when she said, as she embraced them both by turns, "My dear children!"

"You have accomplished your journey, Lady Davenant, better than you expected," said the General.

Something struck her in the tone of his voice. She turned quickly, saw her daughter lay her hand upon his arm, and saw that arm withdrawn!

They all entered the saloon—it was a blaze of light; Lady Davenant, shading her eyes with her hand, looked round at the countenances, which she had not yet seen. Lady Cecilia shrank back. The penetrating eyes turned from her, glanced at Helen, and fixed upon the General.

"What is all this?" cried she.

Helen threw her arms round Lady Davenant. "Let us think of you first, and only—be calm."

Lady Davenant broke from her, and, pressing forwards, exclaimed, "I must see my daughter—if I have still a daughter! Cecilia!"

The General moved. Lady Cecilia, who had sunk upon a chair behind him, attempted to rise. Lady Davenant stood opposite to her; the light was now full upon her face and figure; and her mother saw how it was changed! and looking back at Helen, she said, in a low, awful tone, "I see it; the black spot has spread!"

Scarcely had Lady Davenant pronounced these words, when she was seized with the most violent spasms. The General had but just time to save her from falling; he could not leave her. All was terror! Even her own woman, so long used to these attacks, said it was the worst she had ever seen, and for some time evidently feared it would terminate fatally.

At last, slowly, she came to herself, but perfectly in possession of her intellects, she sat up, looked round, saw the agony in her daughter's countenance, and holding out her hand to her, said, "Cecilia, if there is any thing that I ought to know, it should be said now."

Cecilia caught her mother's hand, and threw herself upon her knees. "Helen, Helen, stay!" cried she; "do not go, Clarendon!"

He stood leaning against the chimney-piece, motionless, while Cecilia, in a faltering voice, began; her voice gaining strength, she went on, and poured out all—even from the very beginning, that first suppression of the truth, that first cowardice, then all

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that followed from that one falsehood—all—even to the last degradation, when in the power, in the presence of that bad woman, her husband found, and left her.

She shuddered as she came to the thought of that look of his, and not daring, not having once dared while she spoke, to turn towards him, her eyes fixed upon her mother's;—but, as she finished speaking, her head sank, she laid her face on the sofa beside her: she felt her mother's arm thrown over her, and she sobbed convulsively.

There was silence.

"I have still a daughter!" were the first words that broke the silence. "Not such as I might have had, but that is my own fault."

"Oh, mother!"

"I have still a daughter," repeated Lady Davenant. "There is," continued she, turning to General Clarendon, "there is a redeeming power in truth. She may yet be more worthy to be your wife than she has ever yet been!"

"Never!" exclaimed the General. His countenance was rigid as iron; then suddenly it relaxed, and going up to Helen, he said,

"I have done you injustice, Miss Stanley. I have been misled. I have done you injustice, and, by Heaven! I will do you public justice, cost me what it will. Beauclerc will be in England in a few days; at the altar I will give you to him publicly; in the face of all the world, will I mark my approbation of his choice; publicly will I repair the wrong I have done you. I will see his happiness and yours before I leave England for ever!"

Lady Cecilia started up: "Clarendon!" was all she could say.

"Yes, Lady Cecilia Clarendon," said he, all the stern fixedness of his face returning at once—"Yes, Lady Cecilia Clarendon, we separate now and for ever."

It was but natural that the General should feel deeply at having been so treated by Lady Cecilia,—nor was it unnatural, that he should be the latest to be convinced of the change in her character. Lady Davenant, who had always condemned herself severely for her neglect of Cecilia's childhood, is persuaded that she has recovered her daughter; and Miss Clarendon, with her usual plainness, declares her confidence in her sister-in-law, at the same time expressing her admiration of some generous and kind affections, which she had never observed before. These circumstances respecting Col. D'Au-

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bigny would not have been known, had not Cecilia revealed them; so that her confession was evidently not a mere acknowledgment, wrung from her by circumstances, but a full outpouring of the heart. Her husband does not relent in his determination to part from her, leaving her to enjoy his fortune in England, while he himself engages in the foreign service of his country.

But, so long as her friend was thus alienated from her husband, at the time too when she was really more than ever worthy of his love, Helen could not be happy. Still the marriage ceremony was performed; the General gave away the bride. At the public breakfast, Lady Davenant, feeble as she was, appeared, and in presence of some of the slanderers who had contributed to bring about these unpleasant results, takes the opportunity to expose their malice, and to a sufficient extent, to undeceive the world; but the exertion is too great for her strength.

'She suffered herself to be carried up the steps into her own apartment by the General, who laid her on the sofa in her dressing-room. She looked round on them, and saw that all were there whom she loved; but there was an alteration in her appearance which struck them all, and most the General, who had least expected it. She held out her hand to him, and fixing her eyes upon him with deathful expression, calmly smiled, and said, "You would not believe this could be; but now you see it must be, and soon. We have no time to lose," continued she, and moving very cautiously and feebly, she half-raised herself—"Yes," said she, "a moment is granted to me, thank Heaven!" She rose with sudden power, and threw herself on her knees at the General's feet; it was done before he could stop her.

"For heaven's sake!" cried he, "Lady Davenant!—I conjure you——"

She would not be raised. "No," said she, "here I die, if I appeal to you in vain—to your justice, General Clarendon, to which, as far as I know, none ever appealed in vain—and shall I be the first?—a mother for her child—a dying mother for your wife—for my dear Cecilia—once dear to you."

His face was instantly covered with his hands.

"Not to your love," continued she—"if that be gone—to your justice I appeal, and MUST be heard, if you are what I think you: if you are not, why, go—go, instantly—go, and leave your wife, innocent as she is, to be deemed guilty—Part from her, at the moment when the only fault she committed has been repaired—

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Throw her from you when, by the sacrifice of all that was dear to her, she has proved her truth—Yes, you know that she has spoken the whole, the perfect truth——"

"I know it!" exclaimed he.

"Give her up to the whole world of slanderers!—destroy her character! If now her husband separate from her, her good name is lost for ever! If now her husband protect her not——"

Her husband turned, and clasped her in his arms. Lady Davenant rose and blessed him—blessed them both; and they knelt beside her, and she joined their hands.

"Now," said she, "I give my daughter to a husband worthy of her, and she more worthy of that noble heart than when first his. Her only fault was mine—mine—my early neglect: it is repaired—I die in peace! You make my last moments the happiest! Helen, my dearest Helen, now, and not till now, happy—perfectly happy in Love and Truth!"'

In reading this very interesting work, we were less pleased with the character of Churchill, than most of the others, though it is evidently labored by the writer. It probably represents an individual or a class, and therefore may inspire more interest at home than abroad. We were not pleased with the affectation of employing French phrases, where English would answer better; there is a knowing air about the practice, more worthy of second-rate scribblers, wishing to astonish the natives, than of a lady of Miss Edgeworth's real attainments. But the moral of the work is unexceptionable; and we believe that the moral effect of it will be such as amply to reward the excellent writer. She has called the attention of all classes,—for this book will be in every hand,—to the essential importance of truth. Sir Thomas Brown says, that the devils do not lie, for if they did hell could not subsist: how this may be, we do not know, though we never imagined that they were particularly scrupulous in regard to this indulgence; but certain it is, that a great proportion of the suffering and dissension of social life, is owing to this prevailing transgression. There is not however so much deliberate falsehood, as indifference to the truth; the latter is quite too general; and he, who is careless of the truth, is not far removed from the liar. Even by those who desire to practice the virtue, it is not always understood; some suppose sincerity to consist in blurting out their hasty and unformed opinions,—in making every man sensible of their prejudice against him, and in never suppress-

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ing any idle thought or feeling, which comes into their head or heart. It is scarcely necessary to say, that when openness degenerates into brutality, as it sometimes does in those who boast of it, it ceases to be a virtue; where it is genuine, it is kind and gentle, as well as resolved and firm. It is not truth that so often offends; it is some passion indulged under its name; thanks then are due to the powerful writer, who shows us what the virtue really is, and impresses us with a sense of its importance, excellence and attraction.

ART. VIII.—*Miss Peabody's Key to History.*

Key to History. Parts I., II., and III. By ELIZABETH P. PEABODY. Boston. 1833.

WE have examined, with attention, these works of a very intelligent lady, and being fully convinced of the merit of her system, we take the opportunity to recommend it, in few words, to the notice of our readers. The plan is undoubtedly formed upon correct principles of instruction, and seems to contain within itself the assurance of its own success; but we are well aware that the value of every practical system can only be determined by experiment, and what we ask is, that the one before us may have a fair and impartial trial. Some of our most successful instructers have, we perceive, given a verdict in its favor: perhaps others, and they are many, who have long lamented the want of some such aid in this department of instruction, may find on trial that the defect is here supplied. We speak of the general system: the details may possibly be found, on experiment, to require correction and improvement; but such alterations, if necessary, are very easily made; and the fact that they may be necessary should not be allowed to impair the value of a system, which is, in itself and in substance, good.

The state of education in this country, so far as respects the study of history, has heretofore been sufficiently forlorn. It was regarded as an interlude, of no value, except to fill up the chasms of the graver business of instruction. Not that its importance was not understood; but simply because the means and materials for pursuing the study were very imperfect, and

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such as were within reach never had been assembled and made accessible by any connected system. Nor perhaps would it have been possible to form any such system, with the heavy and broken materials which alone existed but a few years ago. They were comprised in such a chaos of lumber, that whoever had any thing to do with the present,—any care or concern of life to attend to,—was obliged to abandon all hope of forming any intimate acquaintance with the past. The spirit faints at the remembrance of Rollin, Gillies, and Millot, through which the former generation waded, 'dolorous and malecontent,' in search of this kind of information,—those channels in which they found only the dust and bones of antiquity, and could obtain no idea of its living and breathing forms. If any one desired to know something of modern history, he was driven to such writers as Mezerai, Father Daniel, and Mariana, the very sight of whose volumes, compared with the duration of human life, was enough to fill the bravest with despair. The results were such as might have been expected: the idea of history, so formed, was a thing of shreds and patches,—more resembling the maps of the Arctic ocean, where land and sea are so harmoniously blended together, than anything which had ever been explored by man. The currents of sacred and classical history came down from the earliest ages in two parallel lines, which, if produced to all eternity, would never meet nor even approach each other. Whoever has suffered from this state of things, which is even now hardly entitled to be regarded as matter of history, will give a hearty welcome to anything in the shape of a system, which promises to deliver the coming generation from an evil under which their fathers suffered and mourned for years.

The work before us is intended to embrace, when completed, a full course of historical education. By a systematic process, the learner is to be led gradually to a familiarity with the subject, so that the memory shall not be laden with cumbrous and unmanageable materials, but only with such as bear upon the object immediately in view, and these, whether dates, incidents, observations or poetical allusions, so arranged as to be taken in with a single glance of the eye. Things well disposed require but little room; and if a general rule of order can be established, so that the records of nations, men, sciences and opinions, shall each have their place in the mind, the student will have his materials at command, always knowing

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where to find and how to use them. It is a great thing to begin well and 'to get the run' of the subject; every young botanist, for example, knows how familiarly a little practice teaches him to refer the new plant to its class and order, where at first all seemed hopeless confusion. In the same manner, if the learner of history begin with a right system of arrangement, the incidents will no longer sit heavy on his mind; each will appear in its proper light and bearing; the spirit of philosophical contemplation will then be able to draw lessons of instruction from them, for information, for improvement, or for forming probable conjectures concerning the destiny of nations or of men.

Nothing however can be accomplished, unless those who commence the study have a deep interest in it; this of course is to be formed; and to make the learner enter into the spirit of the study at once, is one of the advantages which this system proposes to secure. The study itself, when once fairly entered upon, soon becomes exceedingly attractive, but the works employed in teaching it are often such, as to quench all the enthusiasm which the young mind begins to feel. It depends on the instructer to remove this difficulty; he must be familiar with the treasured wisdom of former times, and be able to select from orators, historians and poets, such passages as will make deep and vivid impressions. It will never do to surrender the mind to a single fascinating writer; the effect of that habit was evident in this country a quarter of a century ago, when the young readers of Hume, republicans though they were by birth and education, were almost to a man in favor of Charles I., forgiving all his usurpations, and thinking on the patriots of the day as cold-blooded fanatics, almost too savage to be men. Nor will it answer, on the other hand, to make an indiscriminate heave-offering of dull writers, since some of them, whose works no mortal would think of journeying through, may have passages which require and repay attention. All this shows the necessity of having accomplished teachers; and yet so wide is the field and so rich and various the attainments required, that no one, who has not made it an almost exclusive study, can ever teach it with success. We fully agree with Miss Peabody in the opinion that it is best to have schools entirely devoted to this study, where the learner may, with small expense of time, be furnished with that right direction in the early steps of the study, which the young cannot

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be expected to take by their own sagacity, and without which, no small amount of labor and life is lost. Where this advantage is not to be had, the work before us is intended to serve as a guide, directing the attention of the teacher of common schools or of the solitary student to such books as will answer his inquiries, and save him from wandering into investigations of things which, at the moment and for the purpose, he does not need to know.

The first object in this instruction is to form the habit of attention; and in the first, or rather the preparatory part of this work, the author has kept this purpose in view. This volume is called the 'First Steps to History;' in it, she has employed the Life of Columbus, as well calculated to inspire the interest and to form the habit on which all subsequent improvement depends. The biography of this illustrious adventurer, beside the patriotic associations which make it so attractive to the children of our country, affords a display of moral courage, perseverance and energy, such as the young naturally admire, and leads them also to an acquaintance with persons, places, scenes, and things in both worlds, such as they delight to know. He is one, who will hereafter seem to stand between the living and the dead; his history will form the bright boundary, which separates ancient from modern times; for his discovery was in every respect the most brilliant, immediate part of that great impulse which was then given to the mind of man by a succession of discoveries, apparently fortunate accidents, but in reality the direct results of principles, which had been long at work and were ready to be manifested the moment the world waked from its sleep of ages. The least thoughtful mind is led to inquire what causes led the way to his bold undertaking, and what effects his success is now producing among men. It may be said that these subjects are too large for the investigation of the young; it may be so; but it is something gained to give them a desire to know. Moreover, the history of the Spanish nation at that time, which cannot be separated from that of Columbus, forces one into acquaintance with that great movement which brought the Saracens from the desert, and established them for so many centuries in the heart of Spain. Nothing is more captivating to the young than the description of Oriental magnificence, whether they see it contending in gallant strife with chivalry on the burning plains of Syria, or reposing in sultry splendor in its

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Asiatic halls. Connected thus with a thousand interesting subjects, the history of Columbus, which fortunately has been written by the right hand, affords an excellent starting point, where the student may begin to learn that interest,—for it is a thing which must be learned,—and those habits of thoughtfulness, also, which are essential to his future success.

The first volume being simply preparatory, the second is to be regarded as the beginning of the system. It contains a series of questions concerning the Hebrews, whose history is connected, by near or distant association, with that of every other Oriental race. They were thrown into the midst of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, and every other people distinguished for arts or arms, and by following the course of their history, the learner is led easily and naturally into an acquaintance with the governments, manners, opinions and religions of early ages. The author regards the Old Testament in this connexion merely as a civil history of the Hebrew state; and in our opinion this, considering her main design, is the proper way to regard it; since, though there are other aspects in which it is more important, they belong to the province of theology, which this work does not profess to teach. The authenticity of the record is proved by arguments forcible and convincing; its divine authority is taken for granted; but had the author undertaken to enter upon theological discussions, beside being absurdly out of place in such a work, they would necessarily have stamped it with the narrow seal of party. The learner is first made acquainted with the geography of the country in question,—a thing indispensable in preparation for the study of any history; since without it, the recollections which the mind gathers in study, having neither local habitation nor name, would soon be irrecoverably lost. On this point reference is made to Jahn's Archaeology, a work now common among us, which contains a vast amount of information crowded within its nutshell. For information concerning the Hebrew government and law, reference is made to Michaelis's Commentary on the Law of Moses, which for obvious reasons should be in the hands of the teacher, not of the young. In general the books of reference will answer their purpose quite as well if retained in the teacher's hands, it being his business to communicate the information which they afford, where it can be done with the happiest effect and most lasting impression. Perhaps there is no work which will give a just view

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of the Hebrew constitution: this defect the teacher must supply; and he can easily excite the admiration of every intelligent youth, by showing that, in the midst of tyranny and barbarism, the divinely commissioned statesman established a government of laws and not of men,—a state in which all were equal, as respected their civil rights,—in which there was no human power above the people, and every member of the state was held directly responsible to God. Here, then, is a civil system, which, apart from its religious connexion, substantially resembled our own; and to find such a system, at such a time, existing in a people who claimed to be under divine protection, would in our opinion go farther than all other arguments, to prove the divine origin of the Hebrew law.

The third part of the Key contains the history of Greece, with questions referring to the historians and poets in whom the various passages of its history may be found. First, the geographical plan of Greece, in its larger outlines, is made familiar to the student's mind, a thing most important where almost every hill and valley is a memorial of the old glories of the land. Some idea of its religion in then given, by referring to the views of Heeren and Constant on the subject; this also is an important step in making the reader familiar with the spirit of the Greek history; for their gods were not mere creations of fancy, but mortal characters translated,—made into gods,—by the simple process of transferring their residence from the earth to the skies: like the castles of the Fairy Morgana, they were not wholly visionary; they were only an enlarged, multiplied and 'spiritually bright' reflection from the clouds of what existed in the earth below. Another reason makes it necessary to be acquainted with these subjects; those immortals have been indebted for their immortality to the power of Grecian genius and the enterprise of Grecian art; this knowledge therefore leads on to an acquaintance with poetry and sculpture, in which the foundations of their fame are laid. It is one great object of the author, knowing how essential it is to awaken an enthusiasm in the study, to make the student familiar with the beautiful creations of antiquity, though not by a naked skeleton of its fables, nor a mere description of its forms. She knows that there is something so fascinating in those creations, that the imagination, as soon as it approaches the subject, rises and spreads its wings; in order that it may not be tamed down by any mechanical process of instruction,

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she endeavors to communicate to the learner a taste, amounting to a passion, for high thoughts and images of beauty, which shall make him travel over the whole broad field of study with a heart full of glory, and an eye on fire with perpetual delight.

In this country, we have no means at general command for giving the learner an idea of Grecian art; the originals are out of question, and even copies and casts are wanting. Another plan is therefore necessarily connected with this system; it is that of furnishing a collection of drawings, illustrative of classical antiquity, giving outlines of statues, bas reliefs and gems, which represent mythological stories or poetical imaginations, and adding to them the sketches which Flaxman and others have drawn, as if to show how modern taste and talent must always find its highest pride in doing reverence to the past. We earnestly hope that this interesting plan will not be abandoned, though it may not be understood and appreciated at once; without some such aid, classical associations will never be distinct and visible as they ought to every cultivated mind. It is truly remarked, that were it only as models for the pencil, these compositions would have great value; but this purpose is incidental; the great advantage is, that they fill the soul with those images of beauty, which are connected with the purest thoughts and feelings of all exalted minds.

We regret that the sketch, we are able at present to give of this work, is so slight: but we trust that our readers will be induced to examine it for themselves; for we are persuaded, that all persons of any cultivation, who in their youth were desirous to become familiar with the past, can remember with sorrow how much time was wasted in unprofitable labor, and how imperfect were their attainments after all. It was like the course of the Englishman, unenlightened in more senses than one, who visited certain scenes in Switzerland by lamp light, and returned but little impressed with the magnificence of the view; even so the light of history, as they enjoyed it, shone on a few points of the prospect, gilding here and there an illustrious period or a memorable name, but giving no idea whatever of the extent and variety of contemplations which the past spreads out before the soul. All this was owing to the want of system; for there is nothing stronger than the hold which this subject takes on the affections. We often see those, who begin to read a work of history with distaste and

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reluctance; but it gains upon them every hour: they meditate upon it by night and day; it gives a direction to their thoughts and a turn to their conversation, and thus the historian, if he be able and interesting, rules for the time, an absolute sovereign of their souls. When they reach the end, they see before them a vacancy, like that which afflicted Gibbon, when he was writing the last page of his work; but often, when the reading is over, they find that, instead of having gained larger views of human nature in past ages, they have only added a few more to that collection of pictures which hang round the dark chambers of the mind. Unless these separate scenes are connected together by a system which shows their relation to each other, they answer no purpose of philosophical investigation; they have no extensive interest, and so far as respects happiness and improvement, all is dead letter in the breast.

Whatever opinion may be formed respecting the system, and we confess that it appears to us that some of the more mechanical parts of it might have been as well executed by an inferior hand, no one who examines it will doubt the ability or attainments of the writer; she is evidently a person of fine powers, and familiar with the subject which she has at heart. Her style is that of one who has never much studied the art of communicating to others, but who pours out with careless freedom the fullness of her mind. Nor is this perhaps a disadvantage; for the great object is to give the spirit of the subject; and animation and originality will inspire earnest enthusiasm, were it by sympathy alone, where the master of details would give up the attempt in despair.

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ART. IX.—*Origin and Character of the old Parties.*

1. *History of the Hartford Convention, with a Review of the Policy of the United States Government, which led to the War of* 1812. By THEODORE DWIGHT, Secretary of the Convention. New York. 1833.
2. *Familiar Letters on Public Characters and Public Events, from the Peace of* 1783, *to the Peace of* 1815. Boston. 1834.

THE first of these works is a history of the Hartford Convention, by the Secretary of that body; the second is anonymous, but is freely attributed in the public prints to a gentleman, who took a somewhat conspicuous part in the old political controversies. They both belong, therefore, to the valuable and interesting class of books containing historical illustrations of political events, by individuals who were in one way or another to a greater or less extent personally connected with them. Writers of this description have been hitherto rare in our country. Our political and military characters have been generally either too busy or too little given to the use of the pen, to furnish the public with materials for their own history or that of their times. In some other countries these works compose, under the name of *Memoirs*, a large, attractive, and we may add, very important department of literature. In France, particularly, the supply of them has been exceedingly abundant; of late years, indeed, they have multiplied in that country to an extent and volume, sufficient, notwithstanding the unparalleled, we had almost said, agonizing interest of the period they describe, to weary the patience of the most indefatigable readers. The memoirs already published on the French Revolution, would compose of themselves a very handsome library, and there is room to suppose that the source is yet by no means exhausted. To the mass of these productions, writers of both sexes have contributed in nearly equal proportions, and if we attach to those of the men who have themselves occupied the highest political stations, such as Napoleon himself and his immediate coadjutors, more importance as political documents, we may freely admit that such works

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as those of Madame Roland, Madame de Staël, Madame de Genlis and the Duchess of Abrantes are among the most agreeable, and under some points of view most instructive, of the collection.

The peculiar advantages and disadvantages of this kind of writing are sufficiently apparent. From the deep and lively interest which is felt by every one in matters immediately connected with his own personal concerns, they will probably be written with spirit and vivacity, and will thus avoid the greatest of all literary faults,—that of dullness. 'All sorts of writing,' says Voltaire, 'are good, except the *tiresome.*' *Tous les genres sont bons hors le genre ennuyeux.* Again, the writer of memoirs will possess almost of necessity a minute and accurate acquaintance with the details of at least some portion of his subject, and even should his general knowledge be limited and his views incorrect, he will yet throw light upon some particular passage or event, the precise history of which might otherwise remain forever unknown. On the other hand, he is prone to extend his communications to an unreasonable length, —to publish twelve or fifteen volumes where two or three would answer every useful purpose,—and, what is a more serious evil, though a great book was regarded by the ancients as no trifling one,—he naturally carries into his description of the events in which he took a part, the feelings and opinions, right or wrong, under the influence of which he acted,—judges of measures and characters in the spirit of a partisan, and furnishes, in short, a more or less *partial* view of his subject.

The works before us exemplify, as would naturally be expected,—the merits and the defects of the class of writings to which they belong. They are both entertaining, and will be read with pleasure by all who feel any interest in the history of the country. If that of Mr. Dwight be less amusing, it has more the air of an official document, and will supply more authentic materials to the future historian. The Familiar Letters are in this respect particularly valuable, on account of the minute and often very curious descriptions which they give of the appearance and private habits of the prominent men of the last generation, with many of whom the author seems to have had opportunities of personal acquaintance. With these merits, which will render them both, though in somewhat different ways, contributions of no inconsiderable value to our national

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literature, they show throughout, as well in the uniformly favorable judgment passed upon the men and measures of one of the political parties that formerly divided the country, as in the harsh censure as uniformly bestowed upon those of the other, that their authors, though writing no doubt with the best intentions, are still to a considerable extent under the influence of the party spirit of the times which they describe.

It is not our purpose, however, to enter into a minute criticism of these works. They do not need our recommendation to give them currency, nor would it perhaps be a profitable labor to undertake to point out in detail such mistakes of fact or opinion, as may have crept into certain passages of them, either from mere inadvertence, or from the cause to which we have just alluded. We propose in the present article to avail ourselves of the occasion afforded by their publication, to present a view of the history of parties in this country,—as we understand it,—somewhat different from that which they suggest,—more favorable to the character of our fathers, and, as we conceive, more conformable to facts and to the acknowledged principles of human action. In recording the view of the old controversies which prevailed at the time in the party to which they belonged, the writers of these works have acted with perfect honesty, and, as we have said, have rendered a service to the literature of the country. But these controversies have long since ceased to exist, and, as we shall show hereafter, can never by any possibility be renewed. The parties which carried them on have disappeared forever from the country. The persons composing the present active generation never took any,—or if any,—more than a very slight and secondary share in them;—never felt the ardent loves, nor the bitter hatreds, which grew out of them, and harrowed up for the time the very inmost soul of society. It seems to us now a strange and painful thing to see our natural and political fathers,—the fathers of our national existence, and social institutions,—all of whom we would willingly regard with equal and unmingled veneration and gratitude,—denounced not merely as obnoxious to occasional error, but as wilfully false to their own fame and the best interests of the country. We cannot persuade ourselves that such denunciations,—however honest and well meant,—can be necessary in reference to the prominent members of either of the former parties. There is ample ground,—as we conceive the subject,—for the belief that both were

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sincere in their views of the great political principles and measures upon which they differed; and that, while a similar contest prevailed at the same time throughout the whole Christian world, it was no where carried on with equal moderation, superior intelligence, or in general in a manner more creditable in every respect to the persons who took the most active share in it, and to the people at large. This is the view which we wish to offer to the consideration of our readers on the present occasion, and which we shall now proceed to develope, recurring occasionally to the works before us in the way of illustration or reference.

The existence of parties in free governments is a matter of course, if not of absolute necessity. In a system which permits no expression of individual opinion,—where no voice is publicly heard but that of the Sovereign, parties are unknown. Any opposition to the will of the master is either suppressed at once or ends in revolution, and the merits of the question at issue can only be discussed in the form of actual civil war. Where a free expression of opinions is allowed, they will naturally be found to differ more or less upon every question of importance, and the people will form themselves into parties as they happen to approve or disapprove the measures which for the time most forcibly engage the public attention. It may be added, that most governments carry with them, in the nature of their constitution, the elements of permanent political divisions, which though more or less active at different times, are never entirely suppressed, and constantly re-appear, perhaps with some variations of name and form, through the whole course of their history. Something of this kind, as we shall presently have occasion to remark, may be seen in the institutions of the United States.

I. The only party division of any consequence which existed in the United States, as Colonies, and up to the close of the revolutionary war, was that of the supporters and the opponents of the Royal Prerogative, respectively distinguished by the familiar names of *Whigs* and *Tories*. The entire prostration of the latter in the war of Independence, and the success of the new government erected by the former upon the ruins of the colonial system, extinguished this division, which has left no traces in the condition or feelings of the people. The most obnoxious and prominent of the Tories retired to England; the rest acquiesced with cheerfulness in the new state

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of things. The Whigs remained in undisputed possession of the field, and having now no common enemy to contend with, had opportunity and leisure,—as always happens in similar cases,—to discover the differences of opinion among themselves. Within three or four years from the conclusion of peace, they were contending with each other throughout the whole country upon new grounds of controversy, with nearly as much zeal as they had before felt in their warfare with the Tories, though it was fortunately displayed in a more pacific shape.

II. This new division,—the second in the order of time of those which have prevailed among us, and one of which the traces are not yet and probably never will be entirely effaced,—was that of the supporters and opponents of the present Federal Constitution, respectively known by the appellations of *Federalists* and *Anti-federalists*. It belongs to the class of those already alluded to, which have their elements in the very nature of the governments of the communities in which they appear. Although our principal concern in the present article is with the parties that grew up after the adoption of the Constitution, yet as those which preceded had a good deal of influence in determining the character and personal composition of the others, it may be proper to make them the subject of a few preliminary remarks.

The Colonies now composing the United States were as such entirely independent of each other, and had no political bond of union excepting the common allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain. Although their contiguous geographical position,—the community of origin, language, laws, manners and religion, and the constant and intimate personal relations existing among the great majority of the individuals composing them, created among them a real and substantial union, which every year of their existence happily tends more and more to consolidate, they were still at that time in form entirely separate. The Colonies in New England, at an early period of their history, established a temporary union among themselves for their mutual defence against the natives, and about the middle of the last century an unsuccessful attempt was made by the Convention that met at Albany to form a more general one. When the Revolutionary crisis became very imminent, the deputies from all the Colonies met in Congress at Philadelphia, to arrange in concert the operations which that

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crisis might render necessary, and when it was deemed expedient to publish a declaration of Independence, they did it in the name of all the Colonies, as one joint instrument. This fact has been thought by some to prove of itself that the Colonies had actually formed themselves into one body politic, before the declaration of Independence, or that the effect of that declaration upon their political condition, whatever it might be, operated upon them jointly and not as separate communities. But with all our respect for some of the persons who hold this opinion, we find it impossible to adopt it. The members of Congress had taken no measures directly intended to form the Colonies into one body politic before the declaration of Independence, and it would be too much to suppose, that so important a change in the condition of a number of independent communities, could be the merely incidental result of any measure intended to effect a different object;—certainly unless the change were necessarily implied in the nature of that measure. Now it did not necessarily follow, because the deputies of the Colonies in Congress declared their independence of the British Crown by a joint instrument, that those Colonies intended to form themselves into one body politic. Nothing is more common than concerted operations against the same foreign power among communities that always have been, are at the time, and intend to remain politically independent of each other. There was therefore nothing in the nature of the act or in the usage of nations, to render it certain or even probable that the deputies in Congress intended, by declaring the independence of the whole in a joint instrument, to form them into one political society. And if such a conclusion were even probable, it would be impossible to admit it, because it is contradicted by the precise letter of the declaration and of the subsequent articles of confederation, both which expressly recognise the Colonies in their new condition as free and *independent States.* In this respect, therefore, the declaration left them in the same position in which they stood before. It simply abolished the connexion, previously existing between them all and the British Crown, and as this was the only political bond of union among them, it left them of course in form entirely separate from and independent of each other. They were at liberty to continue to exist as thirteen independent States, to enter as independent States into one or more confederacies, in which

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they should retain their independence, or to surrender wholly or in part their independence, and form themselves into one or more bodies politic, under a common government, organized on any principles and in any shape which they might deem expedient. The *substantial* union naturally existing among them, to which we have already adverted, as well as the indispensable necessity of combined military and political operations against the common enemy, precluded the idea of entire separation, and pointed to a close and intimate connexion. On the other hand, a variety of very obvious considerations would naturally suggest, at least as the first experiment, a form of union which should maintain and recognise the entire independence of the States. Such was accordingly the character of the system first agreed upon, and which is commonly called that of the *old Confederation.*

This system resembled very nearly the leagues of independent States which have existed in other ages and countries, and the scheme, however inferior it may have been to the one finally adopted, does no discredit to the learning or the discernment of our revolutionary statesmen. It was in fact, highly honorable to their discretion, that before they launched out into new experiments, they made trial of one of the most approved systems then known to the world. The Confederacies of free States which have flourished in ancient and in modern times, are illustrious in history, and have met the approbation of the most profound and sagacious political writers. Montesquieu devotes a chapter to this form of government, which he represents as nothing less than perfect. 'A confederacy of this description,' he remarks, 'is in no danger either from foreign violence or domestic corruption, and is thus clear of all defects. It unites the strength and security of a great monarchy with all the internal advantages of a free state.' In following the footsteps of the genius of ancient Greece,—in imitating the examples of Etruria, the mother and nurse of Rome,—of Switzerland and Holland, favorite seats of learning, liberty and virtue,—in yielding to the authority of Montesquieu,—our fathers did what all wise and good men would have done in their places. They were not ignorant of the misfortunes and the fall of the ancient States that were organized in this form, but they also knew that we were placed under circumstances in every respect more favorable, and might reasonably hope for a better fate. Switzerland and Holland were still flourishing

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in all their glory, and were generally regarded by the friends of liberty as among the best existing models of free governments.

Independently of these circumstances, which might have determined our fathers to give a preference in the abstract to a confederacy of independent States over any closer connexion, they had not, in fact, (morally speaking) the liberty of choice. The States, as we have already remarked, were as Colonies, in form, wholly independent of each other, and had no political bond of union excepting the common allegiance to the Crown. When this was dissolved, they remained entirely separate: and having certain common concerns to manage, it was a matter of course, if not of necessity, that they should come to the management of them as independent communities. The first act of Confederation did not make them independent of each other, but found them so. It was a simple expression of their existing situation and of the mode of administration to which it naturally led. Before they introduced any essential change in their political condition, it was right not only to wait for tranquil times, but to wait until they found by experience that any such change was necessary. They took things as they found them, like men of sound practical judgment as they were; and the old Confederation,—defective as it afterwards proved to be,—nevertheless justified their preference, and carried us nobly through the revolutionary war. It was discovered in the sequel to be tainted with one fatal vice, which made a reform indispensable, and which naturally suggested as a remedy the adoption of the leading principle of distinction between the former and the present system. The radical defect of the old Confederation,—and it was one inseparable from the nature of the system,—was, that the authority of Congress proceeded from and acted upon the State authorities, and not the individual citizens; while it is the leading principle of the present Federal Constitution, that the authority of the General Government proceeds from and acts upon the individual citizens, and has little or no concern with the States.

The parties, since known by the names of *Federalists* and *Anti-federalists*, made their appearance for the first time in the Convention which framed the Constitution. The object for which the meeting had been called, was to amend the existing articles of Confederation; but when the members had assembled, it was found to be the opinion of a large number of

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them, constituting, as it appeared in the sequel, a majority of the whole, that it was more expedient to adopt and recommend to the people an entirely new draft, materially altering the fundamental principles of the former system. The prominent defect of the Old Confederation was obviously the inefficiency and feebleness of the central power, and there was a general feeling that it ought to be strengthened, but in what way, and to what extent this was to be done, were questions upon which there was every variety of individual opinion. Hamilton went so far as to propose that the Senate should be chosen for life, and that the President should name the Governors of the States; others would have left the relations between the States and the essential powers of Congress nearly as they stood before. The division on general principles was between those who were disposed to strengthen the General Government at the expense of the power of the States, on the one hand, and on the other those who wished to maintain the complete independence of the States at all hazards, and to give no authority to the General Government which was inconsistent with it. The Constitution, as finally adopted, was a sort of compromise between the two parties. It did not quite meet the views of the highest-toned supporters of Federal principles, and was still less palatable to the friends of entire State independence. It made, in fact, a very large encroachment on the independence of the States, by introducing, as we remarked above, the principle of a direct relation between the individual citizen and the central power for all federal purposes, or in other words by converting the States, for all the purposes to be effected by the union, into one body politic. The Constitution, though drafted by a convention of delegates appointed by the State Governments, was submitted for ratification and adoption, not to those governments, but to the individual citizens, and became when adopted, a social compact, the parties to which formed themselves into one body politic, under a common government, for the purposes therein specified, and maintained for all others the existing powers of the States. Though it did not, as we have said, precisely suit the views of some of the most decided supporters of Federal principles, and was to a certain extent, a sort of compromise, it was regarded on the whole as a Federal measure. It was actively supported as such, even by those who would have approved a still stronger infusion of Federalism, particu-

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larly Hamilton, and its adoption by the people was viewed as the triumph of the Federal party.

It is worthy of remark, however, and it is creditable to the character of the Anti-federalists, that after the Constitution was finally adopted, they acquiesced in it with cheerfulness. From that time to this it has been regarded, by the unanimous consent of the country, as a system approaching very nearly to perfection, and which could not in any way be materially improved. The previous division of opinion upon general principles continued to exist, and the party names were kept up, but the question now turned, not upon the merit of the Constitution, but upon its meaning and the manner in which it ought to be construed. As the real character of a written constitution can hardly be ascertained in any other way than by experience, the ground of controversy, though somewhat narrowed, was still sufficiently extensive. Most of those who had actively supported the Constitution before its adoption, were now disposed to give it in practice the construction most favorable to the power of the General Government. Most of their opponents, including however some prominent persons of the other party, particularly Mr. Madison, were disposed to give it a strict construction. Some even went so far as to contend that the States still retain their independence, or in the popular language, *Sovereignty*, and that the present Federal Union is nothing more than another league of independent States, like the Old Confederation, under a somewhat different form.

This division of parties is the one most natural to our condition as a people, and to the form of our Government. It is one which must necessarily enter more or less into all those which may be formed on other grounds, and will probably reappear from time to time, in the absence of other less permanent causes of excitement, as long as the present Government shall endure. Though the controversies that followed the adoption of the Constitution pretty soon came to turn almost wholly, as we shall presently see, upon matters of foreign policy, yet in considering the measures of the Federal Government the question constantly recurred, whether they were or were not within the limits of its constitutional power, and of course what those limits were. The Funding system and the National Bank,—the proclamation of Neutrality,—the Alien and Sedition laws,—the repeal of the Judiciary Act,—the pur-

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chase of Louisiana,—the embargo, and many of the war measures were opposed, not merely as inexpedient but as unconstitutional. When the old party divisions subsided, after the close of the war, the first appearance of a new one, turning upon principles of any kind and not entirely personal, was the recent revival of the original Federal and Anti-federal controversy, in reference to the question, whether the General Government has a constitutional right to impose laws for the protection of domestic industry. In this case South Carolina maintained the extreme doctrine, that the States are still entirely independent of each other, and that the Union is only the Old Confederacy in another shape, while the President in his Proclamation pushed the Federal principle to the other extreme, by affirming that the States composed one body politic even before the declaration of Independence. In the present controversies on the subject of the Bank and the measures of the Executive in relation to it, the question of the constitutional limits of the power of the various departments of the Federal Government is constantly recurring; and it must, as we have said, continue to recur in connexion with every other subject that may temporarily engage the public attention and create divisions in the body of the people, as long as the present Constitution of Government shall last.

This division of parties is therefore the natural result of our condition and political institutions. It is of course unnecessary and consequently uncharitable to suppose, without direct and sufficient proof, that individuals, in attaching themselves to one or the other of these parties, were governed by unworthy or selfish motives. It was easy to say, as was frequently said at the time of the formation and adoption of the Constitution, that Hamilton was at heart a friend of monarchy, and supported a strong Federal Government because he expected to occupy the highest place himself, and wished to be, no matter under what name, the monarch of the Union; or on the other hand, that the persons who sustained the rights of the States were aware of their incompetency to figure on a large theatre, and were only anxious to continue to act as little dictators, each in his own precinct. It is no doubt true that, in the motives by which individuals were governed in their political conduct, there was the same mixture on this as on all other occasions of principle, patriotism, honorable ambition, and the merely selfish thirst for gain or office. But it would be very difficult to show

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that the good motives were all on one side, and the bad on the other, or even that the extent to which good or bad motives operated in each respectively was materially different. The mixture was in the mind of each individual. The question was in itself a doubtful one. When it came to be agitated, a difference of opinion was inevitable, and, in taking sides, individuals were governed in a great measure by the personal and political circumstances in which they were placed. We find accordingly many of the best and wisest men in the country arrayed on both sides of this great question; again, the same individuals appear at different times on both the opposite sides. Mr. Madison, the father we may almost say of Federalism, became immediately after its adoption one of the champions of the Anti-federal party. What is still more remarkable, and may be considered as a very curious chapter in the philosophy of human nature, as well as in the history of our party divisions, whole parties, in changing their positions, have been found in this respect to change the general tendency of their opinions. The vigorous supporters of the Federal Constitution for the three first Presidential terms, during which they had in their hands the administration of the Government, maintained their principles and professed to construe the Constitution in favor of the extension of Federal powers; while their adversaries, the original opponents of the Constitution, opposed most of their measures, for the reason, among others, that they transcended the limits of the constitutional powers of the Federal Government. The political revolution of 1800 changed the respective positions of the two parties, and with it, after no very long interval, the respective tendencies of their opinions and proceedings; sometimes in reference to the same measures. The Anti-federal or Democratic party, being now in possession of the powers of the Federal Government, exhibited no very marked disposition to restrain the extent of those powers within the narrowest possible limits. Mr. Jefferson purchased Louisiana, almost avowedly without any constitutional authority. Mr. Madison, as President, approved a National Bank, which he opposed while a representative in Congress as unconstitutional; and even at the present day we have a President, elected by a party claiming to represent the Democratic or Anti-federal party of old times, pushing, in a public proclamation, the doctrines of Federalism to an extreme to which they had never been carried in any official act of the

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Federalists themselves. On the other hand, the latter, when they came into opposition, exhibited very soon a decidedly Anti-federal tendency. The leading measures of the administration, such as the purchase of Louisiana, the non-intercourse and the embargo laws, and the operations connected with the war, were attacked for the most part on Anti-federal ground. The General Government had no right to pass an embargo law. The President had no right to judge for himself, whether a case had occurred in which he was authorized to call out the militia,---he had no right to march the militia out of the country,—and so of the rest. We mean not here to express an opinion upon the merits of any of these questions, but merely to remark that the Federal opposition adopted in general an Anti-federal construction of the Constitution. The amendments proposed by the Hartford Convention were generally of Anti-federal tendency. It is probable indeed that we may assume, as a general principle, applicable to most of the political controversies of this country, that however parties may originate, the one in power will be naturally a Federal, and the one in opposition an Anti-federal party.

But however this may be, it is obviously unnecessary and of course uncharitable to suppose, without direct proof, that individual members of either of the great parties, which respectively supported and opposed the Federal Constitution at the time of its formation and adoption, were actuated by selfish or unworthy motives. The course pursued by its supporters having been approved by the unanimous acquiescence of the country, requires no defence: and however highly we may now value the Constitution, it can be no matter of surprise with any reflecting man, that when first submitted to the people, it should have met with great opposition. The adoption of it accomplished a most material change in the Government of the country:—a change hardly less important, though effected without bloodshed, than that which gave us independence. Had this taken place without commotion or resistance, the fact would have proved the indifference of the citizens to their dearest interests, and not their good sense or public virtue. Nor need we conclude that the Anti-federalists acted from vicious motives, or were even generally ill-informed or perverse. They were in fact, on the contrary, the party which had in its favor the presumption of right, because they defended the existing state of things against innovation. They had

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also the popular pretence of asserting the rights of States and individuals against the encroachments of Government:—another golden topic. Nor did they want authority to back their reasoning. On the contrary, the weight of names, with a single exception, which probably turned the scale against them, was perhaps on the whole on their side. Take for example Virginia and Massachusetts, which were at that time, as they have always been, among the leading States of the Union. In Massachusetts,—setting aside John Adams, who was then in Europe,—the two most distinguished revolutionary patriots, the only two persons in the country, whose zeal had obtained for them the singular honor of proscription,—John Hancock and Samuel Adams, were,—to say the least,—very doubtful friends to the Constitution. On the other hand, who were its principal partisans,—the Parsonses, the Kings, the Ameses and so forth? —Men of yesterday,——young lawyers, before unknown to the country. They gave proof no doubt of eloquence, of talent, of book learning; but were these qualities, however precious in their way, to counterbalance the mature wisdom, the rich experience, the tried patriotism of the incomparable fathers of our liberty?

Look now at Virginia. Mr. Madison, a young barrister of about thirty years of age, comes forward and proposes to his fellow citizens to abandon a part of their individual and State rights, and submit to a General Government, possessing large and because untried, of course unknown powers:—to acknowledge a single ruler (*Monarch*) under the name of a President, the precise extent of whose authority future experience alone could determine. The proposition was, it must be owned, not very palatable, and might well have alarmed a people less jealous on the subject of State rights than that of the Ancient Dominion. Under these circumstances, the oldest and most respected of the revolutionary patriots,—the man who was the first in all the country to raise the cry of independence, Patrick Henry himself,—then, if we recollect rightly, Governor of the State, tells them in the same familiar voice, sweeter than music, that was never known to deceive,—that never lisped a sound that was not as pure and as true as the word of inspiration,—that Mr. Madison, though a clever and honest man, is wrong,—that the innovations he proposes are dangerous,—that under the name of a President he is imposing upon the country a tyrant in disguise, who will

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place one foot upon the border of Maine, and the other upon the farthest extremity of Georgia; and then,—Farewell to Liberty!* Is it singular that in such a conflict of opinions and authorities, the people of Massachusetts and Virginia should have been divided, and that a strong party should have been opposed to the new system? It is evident, on the contrary, that the only wonder is how, in this state of things, which existed substantially throughout the Union, the Federal Constitution could have been adopted. The force of truth,—the pressure of the immediate inconveniences resulting from the vices of the old system, the unwearied authority of the friends of the new,—and above all, the influence and authority of Washington must be well considered, before we can conceive the possibility of this salutary reform.

Are we then lightly to charge the tried friends of the country, who opposed the Constitution, with selfishness or faction? Are we even to regret their opposition, since happily it proved ineffectual? It may boldly be said, on the contrary, that it was natural for many of the wisest and best men of the day, in their position, and at their age, to take this course. They had devoted the freshness of their youth,—the maturity and vigor of their riper years,—all the strength and wisdom that God had given them, to the purpose of procuring for the country this

* That the Constitution is a social compact can hardly be doubted. The question who, precisely speaking, are the parties to this compact, —that is,—whether it is a compact between the States or the individual citizens, is perhaps not quite so clear. The Convention was called by the delegates of the States in Congress:—the delegates to the Convention were appointed by the State Legislatures, and the Constitution, as agreed upon by them, was not to go into effect until ratified by a certain number of States, and then only between those States. Thus far every thing wears the appearance of a compact between the States. On the other hand the Constitution was submitted for ratification, not to the State Legislatures, but to the citizens assembled by their Representatives in Convention. A proceeding of this kind, though the Carolina statesmen are in the habit of representing it as the highest exercise of sovereignty, is in fact almost the only one in which the members of the body politic act, not in their sovereign character as a community, but simply as men and individuals. As the mode in which the instrument was adopted, is the circumstance which finally determines its character, the better opinion would appear to be that it is, like the State Constitutions, a compact between the individual citizens. The question is one of curiosity rather than practical use, since a compact of this kind is in its nature not liable to be dissolved at the discretion of the parties whether States or individuals.

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state of things, which it was now proposed to change. Was it for them, when they had reached the ordinary term of human existence, to begin a new and contrary course of action, and to undo what they had been all their lives so laboriously doing? Surely not. Much as we admire the Constitution,—much as we rejoice that it was adopted,—we confess that we like these sterling old hearts the better for adhering firmly to the text of State Sovereignty and the old Confederation, in defiance of what they doubtless regarded as a wanton and headstrong spirit of innovation.

III. Thus much we have deemed it proper to remark upon the origin and characteristics of the original Federal and Anti-federal parties. We proceed to notice, in the same summary way, the new division which grew up soon after the *adoption of the Constitution, and which, though it coincided* to a considerable extent, as respects the personal composition of the parties, with the preceding one, turned on questions essentially different. Of the new parties, the one that finally prevailed assumed the name of the Democratic, or Republican party:—the other was designated by its opponents as the aristocratic party, but continued to claim the title of Federal, although the subjects in controversy were now in a great measure foreign to the character or construction of the Constitution, and although the doctrine of the party in regard to the latter gradually assumed, as we have said, an Anti-federal tendency. There was this marked distinction between this division and the preceding one, that while the latter turned upon points of controversy that were purely American, and was of course confined to this country, the former was only one branch of a general division, that prevailed at the time and still continues to prevail through the whole civilized world.

In the early part of the year 1789,—the same in which the Federal Constitution went into operation,—about two months after the meeting of the first Congress, chosen under the provisions of that instrument,—another body, composed in like manner, of the elected deputies of a great people, which was called in the first instance the *States General*, but afterwards took the title of the *National Assembly* of France, met, on the summons of the king, at Versailles, then the residence of the French Court. This event was the first in the order of time, of a series of political and military movements, of absorbing interest and unparalleled importance,

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which succeeded each other for the next five and twenty years with breathless rapidity,—determined the policy of all other governments, and created divisions of opinion throughout the Christian world, which for the time superseded and obliterated all others. Circumstances, which we need not here recapitulate, but which resolve themselves substantially into the increased wealth and intelligence of the industrious classes of the community, had inspired these classes, in all the most civilized countries and especially in France, with a strong desire to reform the existing constitutions of Government, and to incorporate into them principles more favorable to individual rights and liberty. The most intelligent and enterprising persons of all classes, generally shared this feeling, and took the lead in the movements that were made for giving it effect. On the other hand, the royal families,—the feudal nobility,—the church, and the long train of their dependents, were alarmed at the probable results of this tendency upon the establishments from which they derived their consequence and even their means of subsistence, and of course opposed it with a zeal not inferior to that by which it was supported. The struggle commenced, and was carried on in various partial forms in the early periods of the history of Modern Europe. We see the symptoms of its approach in the Jack Cade rebellion in England, and that of the *Jacquerie* in France,—in the tumultuous wars of the Flemish Cities against their feudal lords, —of the Guelphs and Ghibelins in Italy, and of the *Communeros* in Spain. The mighty movement of the Reformation, though directed immediately to other objects, derived much of its interest from its indirect effects upon the political situation of the parties to it. In England, indeed, the Reformation gradually lost its original character, and assumed that of a bloody and finally a triumphant effort for political improvement. This was the first occasion in which the principle of reform, that had been so long at work, displayed itself in a great country in its proper shape. Our own Revolution was the next instance, but in both these cases the operation of the principle was limited in a great measure to the particular countries which were its principal seat. It was not until the immediate scene of action was transferred to France,—the heart, as we may say, of the great Christian commonwealth of nations,—that it was first perceived how intimately the causes of the movement were interwoven with the very foundations of the political system of Christendom, and the tranquillity of the world.

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From that time till the present day, but more especially till the termination of the general war in Europe by the fall of Napoleon, the whole internal and foreign policy of all the powers of Europe and America, has been directly or indirectly connected with the causes and circumstances of this great quarrel. In every nation which was important enough to be at all affected by the operation of general causes, there grew up at once two great domestic parties, which espoused respectively the two opposite sides of the question at issue, applying it in each to the particular circumstances of their respective governments. Where discussion was tolerated, the controversy blazed out at once through the press,—in deliberative assemblies,—in popular meetings. Where public demonstrations of this description were prohibited, it silently agitated the mass of society in its dark and secret depths, until it finally burst forth with volcanic eruptions in the shape of open rebellions,—military revolutions,—the falling off of colonies from the parent country. Accordingly as one or the other party predominated in the domestic policy of each particular nation, and was consequently represented by the Government, the foreign policy of each assumed a different aspect; and within two or three years from the holding of the French National Assembly, the difference had grown up into an open and general war, involving all the leading powers of Europe, as principals, and all the inferior ones as allies and dependents. The great military monarchies of the East, in which the advancement of wealth and intelligence, that lay at the bottom of the movement, was still in a great measure unknown,—where the Government was still every thing, and the individual nothing,—naturally took their places at the head of the party opposed to change and in favor of existing institutions. France, with most of the nations in her neighborhood,—the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal, Switzerland, Italy and the greater part of Germany,—composed the opposite one. What part England would take in this quarrel, was, from her insular position and the nature of her government,—itself the result of a revolutionary movement, proceeding substantially upon the principle at work in France,—beforehand in some degree doubtful. The hereditary hostility to France, and the instinct of self-preservation in the Government as such, (the existing form of which would probably have been endangered by any

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connexion with that country ;) after some delay and hesitation decided the question. The navy and the wealth of the Queen of the Ocean were thrown into the scale of the great Confederacy of the Continent, and gave it an efficiency which ensured its triumph for the first half century of the quarrel, and in Europe perhaps forever. Whether the British Government consulted the real and permanent interest of the British nation in thus aiding to break down the only imaginable barrier against the ultimate military ascendancy of Russia over the whole of Europe, is a point which we need not here discuss, but which, —from the present policy of the British Government, in reference to substantially the same question,—is, we may presume, considered very doubtful even in England.

France declared the war, which however could not properly be viewed as, on either side, offensive or defensive,—because the particular griefs brought forward on one side or the other at the time of the original declaration and afterwards, were rather the pretences, or at most the occasions, than the causes of the quarrel. These, as we have seen, lay much deeper than any accidental dispute about Malta, Oldenburg, or the little principalities on the borders of the Rhine. With this declaration, however, commenced the long and extraordinary series of military and political events which filled up the history of the next thirty years, and which, in variety, magnitude, and interest, throw completely into the shade all the other great social movements recorded in the annals of the world. In those of modern Europe there is nothing at all to be paralleled with them, except the Reformation: which was in fact, as we have seen, substantially the same action, proceeding on a smaller scale, in a much less expanded form, and, of course, with far less brilliancy and effect;—a rehearsal, as it were, by way of prelude to the final representation of the grand tragedy. Never before were the greatness and the weakness,—the folly and the wisdom,—the glory and the shame of our nature displayed in fuller relief, in all their various forms, than on both sides of this long and not yet ended struggle, wherever it was carried on. First came the clash of contending disciplined armies,—then the shock of whole nations rising as it were in a sort of fury, and precipitating themselves in masses on each other. A host of accomplished commanders sprang as if by enchantment from the lowest ranks of the army ;—and finally, towering above them in the gran-

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deur of unapproached and unquestionable superiority, arose the 'Man of Destiny.' With heroes like these for her champions, and her whole infuriated population in their train, France,—like a beautiful maniac released from confinement,—roaming from country to country,—influenced by her doctrine and example, seduced by her charms, overwhelmed by her power, and finally ground to the dust, under an iron military despotism a great part of Europe, until the sleeping Colossus of the North was goaded into action, and compelled to acquire by experience a consciousness of power, which will probably not very soon be forgotten. Such was the course of events on the field of battle: in the meantime what exhibitions of intellectual talent in deliberative assemblies and in print! Never before, at least since the brilliant days of Greece and Rome, had the world seen any thing like the constellation of orators that now appeared in the Parliaments of England and France, and our own Congress; never before was the theory of Government so thoroughly probed to the bottom in all its parts, and illustrated with such transcendent power of thought and various graces of style, as in the best works of the political writers of those countries. Upon the annals of this eventful period, which will form forever the manual of the student in philosophy and politics, a few names stand conspicuously above the rest, as *unique* in their respective ways:—NAPOLEON in the field,—MIRABEAU at the tribune,—BURKE in the cabinet,—WASHINGTON,—if we may view him as one of the personages of this great action,—as the hero, or perfect man,—'the world's great master and his own.'

This division of opinion, feeling and action which, as we have said, pervaded the whole Christian world, formed the basis of the new division of parties that grew up in this country after the Constitution went into operation. In the first instance, the whole American people sympathized warmly with the leaders of the French Revolution, among the foremost of whom they saw their own admired and beloved La Fayette. At this time there was no dissentient voice upon the subject among us. The whole people beheld with pride and gratification the first nation on the Continent of Europe, apparently moved by their impulse and in imitation of their example, attempting to recover its political and personal rights. Even the well-tempered mind of Washington was wrought up into something like enthusiasm, as appears very plainly from

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his address to the minister Adet. But when the Revolution, in its onward and hurried progress, began to overstep the limits of justice and humanity at home and to trample on the rights of other nations abroad,—when the French agents in this country endeavored to engage us in the war, and when there were even appearances of an intention to overthrow our own hardly established Government,—the ardor of many of the more judicious friends of the cause very rapidly cooled, and a large portion of the citizens began to look with disgust upon the whole revolutionary movement, and with favor and sympathy upon the efforts of the party in Europe, which sustained the cause of the existing political institutions. These opposite feelings were the real causes, that gave animation and interest to the long struggle of the Federal and Democratic parties. The controversy turned ostensibly on various questions of law and fact, connected with the administration of our own and other governments, and on the characters of prominent men at home and abroad, but the decision in all these cases was very much influenced, if not absolutely determined by the opinion of the individual, in regard to the great principles upon which the parties were divided. From the most important maxims of public law, down to the simplest rules of construction and grammar, it was uniformly found that those who agreed in their general political views would also agree upon the particular point at issue. Thus, when the act of the French Government, repealing the decrees of Berlin and Milan, was published, it became a matter of discussion whether the French phrase *bien entendu*, implied a condition precedent or a condition subsequent, and it was unanimously decided by the two parties (among whom there were comparatively few persons who understood the French language,) on the one side that it implied the former, and on the other the latter;—the truth being, that it implies either indifferently, according to the terms of the context.

The people of this country, therefore, like all their contemporaries, were arranged into two great parties, according to their respective opinions and feelings upon the political questions then and still in agitation throughout the Christian world. On a view of this state of things, the first question that naturally presents itself, is, which of these parties was in the right, and which in the wrong? To those who have well

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considered this subject,—and who that for the last half century has extended the sphere of his observation an inch beyond his own fireside, has not?—it is hardly necessary to say that this question, taken in the abstract, admits of no solution. The two parties rallied respectively under the banners of the two great principles of LIBERTY and LAW. Both these principles are essential elements in the constitution of society, in whatever form it may be organized, and neither can possibly exist in practice to the entire exclusion of the other. Liberty without law would be the subversion of society; law without liberty would efface the individual, and leave him no existence as a moral and intellectual agent. Both these states are not merely inconsistent with right, but impossible in fact. Society cannot exist without individuals, nor can individuals exist without society; and as each can only exist in connexion with the other, each must have of necessity as well as of right an appropriate sphere of activity. In other words, the individual must in every event possess a greater or less degree of liberty, and the society, as represented by the government, a greater or less degree of power, the expression of which is the law. The form of Government is determined by the manner in which these two essential elements of social order are combined; and whether a particular government be good or bad, that is, well or ill adapted to the condition and character of the society, is a question which may be solved, although the solution can in general only be furnished by the results of a pretty long experience. But if the question be, which of two persons or parties, respectively favoring the principles of law and liberty, is right, and which is wrong?—it is obvious, as we have said, that no answer can be given. Perhaps we may say, in such a case, that both are in the right. Both profess and sustain principles in themselves correct, and essential to the public welfare. Each has been led by circumstances or character to look at the body politic from a particular point in view. The friend of liberty loves to dwell on the busy movement of the individual members, and fears to see it hampered by the wanton interference of Government; the champion of law prefers to contemplate the harmonious action of the whole, and is more apprehensive that this will be disturbed by the eccentric efforts of individuals. If they are brought in any way into collision, each is naturally prone to misunderstand and misrepresent

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the intentions of his opponent: an impartial observer sees without difficulty that both are substantially in the right. It is the old fable of the two knights, who were about to engage in single combat on the subject of the color of a shield, which was black on one side and white on the other, and of which each had seen only the side next to him.

But though the great questions at issue in this controversy may properly be considered as insoluble in the abstract, it is, nevertheless, certain that at particular times and places the general current of opinion among the active portion of the community will naturally take a direction towards one side or the other. When the want of the wholesome influence of a settled and regular Government has been for some time experienced, the tendency will be strong in favor of law. Such was the case in this country, during the period which followed the peace of independence, and in this way only can we account for the possibility of accomplishing by tranquil means such a change, as was made by the adoption of the Federal Constitution. Such must now be the case in Spanish America; and it would therefore be quite natural that the next great effort, which we may witness in those regions, should be an attempt to give more efficiency to their political institutions. When on the other hand, the opposite evil, that is, the abuse of power by the existing authorities, has been for a long time the one principally felt, the tendency of opinion will be towards political reform and individual liberty. Such, as we have seen, was the state of things throughout the Christian world, (including this country, with the exception of the short interval of time just alluded to;) for more than two centuries before the opening of the French Revolution. From the first preaching of Luther, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, till the meeting of the States General in France, at the close of the eighteenth, the whole *mind* of Europe was intensely occupied in efforts to effect a reform of abuses, real or supposed, in the existing institutions, political and religious. All the energy, activity and spirit of society were employed in this way: all the powerful thinking,—fine writing,—bold and vigorous action were among the reformers;—the newly discovered and tremendous artillery of the press was almost wholly in their hands. There was nothing to oppose them but the constantly diminishing *vis inertiae* of the established institutions, until the excesses of the French Revolution finally awoke a reaction.

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Compare, for example, the lion-port of Luther with the caution of Erasmus, the most intelligent advocate of the old religion. Compare at a later period the Miltons, Lockes, Sydneys, Montesquieus, Voltaires, Rousseaus, with their too unequal adversaries, whose very names must now be hunted up in the dust of a library. A zeal,—a rage we may call it,—for improvement was the leading characteristic of the period,—or in the common language,—the *spirit of the age*. It created a current of opinion which drew in with irresistible force all the active and energetic members of society as fast as they came upon the stage of action, and determined for life their position in reference to this great question, unless it was afterwards changed by accidental influences of an opposite character.

In this country the case was stronger perhaps than in almost any other. The very existence of our community was a double revolt against the established institutions and consecrated principles of the old world. The original settlement of the Colonies, at least in New England, was determined on in stern and desperate defiance of oppression. It was a new *secession of the people*,—not, like that of Rome, to a neighboring hill, but to another hemisphere. The Revolution that tore us from the mother country, and first gave us a national existence, was another not less decisive exhibition of the same spirit. Our fathers, and forefathers, the Puritans, led the van in Europe and America in the active demonstration of the principles that agitated the world. What the Luthers, the Lockes, the Montesquieus were tracing on parchment in their closets, the Hampdens, and the Cromwells were writing in blood with the points of their swords upon the tablets of history. They effected the British Revolution, and, as Hume correctly remarks, gave to England all the liberty she ever did possess or ever will. When the country they had thus liberated, undertook, in reward for the service, to oppress them, they resisted the futile attempt, as may well be supposed, with indignant decision, and gave the world another practical illustration of the *spirit of the times*. Then rose into being the wonder of the Western world, our young Republic, bodying forth in sober earnest, in actual terrestrial reality, before the eye of Christendom, the lovely vision that had so long fired the imaginations of her sons. It was to them, in the language of the Apocalypse, 'the Holy City coming down from God out of heaven, beautiful as a bride adorned for her husband.' The

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most intelligent, accomplished, and gallant of the chivalry of Europe came out in crowds to fight our battles, and went home exasperated almost to insanity by the lessons they had learned, and the feelings they had imbibed among us against the abuses of their own Governments. Our Declarations of Independence, and the Rights of Man, became at once their sacred volume. We do but repeat an admitted and familiar truth, when we say, that our example was the spark that fired the mass of revolutionary materials which had so long been accumulating in France; that *the Fourth of July, 1776, opened,* to use the words of an eminent German writer, *a new era in the history of the civilized world.*

Such being the spirit of the times, and such the relation in which our country stood to its development and practical exhibition, is it wonderful that the Democratic party,—which represented with us the friends of *improvement* and *liberty,*—should have embraced a very large portion of the people? That the Federalists, who represented, in like manner, the counteracting movement in favor of established institutions and the law, should have generally been in a minority, often a very small one? Setting entirely aside the abstract question of right, which we have seen to be insoluble, and the minor practical questions of law and fact, which successively came up, and in regard to which the two parties were alternately in the right and in the wrong, is it wonderful that the grand overwhelming current of opinion, which swept down every thing before it, should have taken the direction it did? Is it wonderful that the generation of that day should have sympathized rapturously and almost unanimously with the fortunes of the patriots abroad, who had already fought our battles and were now practising upon our lessons and example? It was sometimes said in the bitterness of controversy, that the democratic party were under *French influence.* Is it not evident, on the contrary, that it was the democratic party in Europe who were thinking, writing, feeling, fighting, and dying under *American influence?* Is it absolutely necessary to suppose that the men who professed and acted on principles and feelings, which they had inherited from three or four generations of ancestors,—which had given them existence as a nation, and all their privileges as citizens of a free Republic,—which were those of the purest, most enlightened, most illustrious men in Europe for the three last centuries, from More to

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Mackintosh,—which had rendered our community an example and a wonder, a burning and a shining light to all the others,—is it, we say, absolutely necessary to suppose that men, who professed and acted upon such principles and feelings, were for that reason, as individuals or as a party, either interested,—corrupt,—inconceivably and intolerably perverse,—or lastly, under foreign influence? We think not.

We go farther even, and admitting that the general question, whether the friends of Liberty or of Law are in the right, is insoluble except by reference to the circumstances of each particular case, we can hardly hesitate to say, taking those circumstances into view,—considering the situation of the civilized world at the time when the tendency to change began,—that this tendency was, on the whole, a beneficial one, and of course that the party which was acting under its influence,—that is, the Democratic party,—though subject, like all other individuals and masses of men, to occasional error of every kind, was mainly, as to its great objects, in the right; and the opposition party, which sustained the existing establishments with all their abuses, in the wrong. We can hardly hesitate to admit, that the first great practical result of this tendency, the Religious Reformation, notwithstanding the excesses,—the horrors, we may say, by which it was disgraced,—not inferior to those of the French Revolution,—was a public benefit:—that its next great practical result, the British Revolution of the seventeenth century, to which we owe the British Constitution of 1688,—the great exemplar of all the representative Governments that have since been established, including our own, was a public benefit:—that its third great result, our own Independence, was a public benefit:—and finally, that the French Revolution, with its consequences throughout the world, including among them the emancipation of Spanish America, and the reform now in progress in the British Government,—with all its unpardonable excesses, which none can lament and abhor more sincerely than ourselves,—will prove in the end a public benefit.

If either of those points were regarded as questionable, it would probably be the last; but even this may now be looked upon as settled, so far at least as any point can be settled by the unanimous consent of the whole English community on both sides of the water. The two parties, which respectively supported and opposed the French Revolution, are still in the pres-

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ence of each other on the continent of Europe, and animated by as deep and deadly a hostility as ever. But in England, as in France, the party which opposed the Revolution has dwindled into a feeble minority, exercising no influence whatever in political affairs. The British Government, once its main champion, is now enlisted on the other side. In this country the party, corresponding with that of the supporters of legitimacy in Europe, has entirely ceased to exist. Although Russia, the head of this party, is, under some points of view, our principal political ally,---she finds no sympathy, as the champion of the Holy Alliance, in any American bosom. The same course of argument on the part of the Continental champions of legitimacy, which was formerly echoed with transport by the Government presses of England and those of the Federal party in this country, is now urged with remarkable ability and eloquence by the writers under Russian influence, and is just as plausible, and, as far as it has truth in it, just as true as it was before. But in England it now finds no friendly response, excepting from a few lingerers of the last generation, such as Wellington and Eldon, to whom we must add the joyous whisky-drinkers of the *Noctes Ambrosianae*, if we can suppose them to be in earnest in their tumultuous and *avowedly drunken* disputations in defence of the strictest construction of morals and law,—in this country none at all. The argument, which Ames illuminated with the rainbow hues of his brilliant fancy ;—which Lowell so long rendered plausible by his close, pointed, and ever ready logic,—is now abandoned. From Maine to Missouri, not a voice was raised in opposition to the Revolution of the Three memorable Days in France,---or to the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill in England ; not a whisper was heard in justification of Charles the Tenth, or in support of the theories or pretensions of the Holy Allies. This country was the first to acknowledge the independence of the Spanish Colonies : England the first European power that followed our example, and in both, the prudence of the Government could hardly keep pace with the general enthusiasm of the people. When the late rebellion broke out in Poland, what was done in this city, which twenty years ago celebrated with so much enthusiasm the victories that placed that kingdom under the government of Russia ? We now celebrated with equal enthusiasm the patriotic effort of the Poles, and sent them out a pair of beautifully painted stand-

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ards as tokens of our sympathy. In their hour of misfortune, the generous Polish exiles come to us for relief and refuge. What was our feeling in regard to the attempts at political improvement during the last twenty years in Belgium, Germany, and Italy? With what sentiments did the American people hail the re-appearance of Greece among the nations,—with what sentiments did they receive, by the latest arrivals, the intelligence that liberty is finally to triumph in the Spanish Peninsula? But we need not push these inquiries any farther. It must be apparent to all, that, though the general question now in agitation throughout the Christian world is, as we have said, in substance, precisely the same as it was twenty years ago, when it formed the subject upon which our domestic parties were divided,—it has now ceased to be a question with us. On this point at least we are happily all agreed.

It may therefore be assumed as certain,—so far at least as the general consent of the English and American public can make it so,—that the tendency, under which the Democratic party acted after the adoption of the Constitution and when the controversy had begun to turn upon the foreign policy of the country, was not only perfectly natural but substantially a right and beneficial one:—that it was, in short, the tendency of the age. It does not however follow, that their opponents were always in the wrong in regard to particular measures. They were strong in the superior correctness of their views in regard to the Federal Constitution, which, though no longer the principal subject of controversy, was occasionally brought into discussion; and they were often strong in the errors of their opponents. While the Federalists remained in power, the Republicans, as is usual with opposition parties, opposed almost every measure of the Government,—and in this way often placed themselves in the wrong. After 1800, the case was reversed in this respect; and the Federalists, from the natural tendency to indiscriminate opposition, were led to disapprove some of the wisest and most fortunate measures that the Government has ever adopted; as, for example, the purchase of Louisiana. While the contest was carried on with activity between these parties, (and it did not subside until the close of the war in 1814:) it was accompanied of course with the bitterness of feeling, which is always generated by such a struggle. Neither party at the time probably did full justice to the other. The serious charges of perversity,

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foreign influence, and even direct bribery and corruption, were bandied about with great freedom. This merely partisan coloring has long since disappeared, with the feelings of which it was a transitory and unsubstantial reflection. It is now admitted by the whole American people, (with the exception of the few individuals remaining in active life, who were themselves engaged in the old controversy,) that these parties were composed, very much like others, of mixed materials;—that of the members of both, some acted on pure principles and patriotic feelings, and some from interested motives, while the mass were influenced by accidental circumstances, over which they had little control;—that taking the parties throughout, the proportion of the different sorts of ingredients was nearly the same in both, although each, in the section where it greatly predominated, naturally included a larger share of the intelligence, property and influence of the community. The strength of the Federalists lay, as is well known, in the North; that of the Republicans in the South.

Notwithstanding the severe reproaches that were lavished by each of these parties on the other, it will now be admitted by every impartial observer, that the manner in which the controversy was conducted, is highly honorable to the character of both, and to that of the country. No where and at no time, especially in a community of such extent, has a civil war of this description been urged with so much moderation,—such uniform regard on both sides for the wholesome restraints of order and law,—such tenderness for human life. Compare the history of these divisions with that of those which distracted the ancient Republics, or the modern free States of Greece, Italy and the Netherlands. Compare the manner in which the controversy was conducted here with that in which substantially the same controversy,—between the great principles of Liberty and Law,—was carried on at the same time in France, England, or any other part of Europe. In the general respect which was here habitually felt for order and life,—in the mutual courtesy which prevailed in public and private discussions,—a few slight aberrations from decorum were magnified into mighty matters; but the worst excesses that occurred here would hardly have been thought worth notice in the newspapers of any other country. There were hard thoughts, and hard words,—more perhaps than charity would always justify;—but there the matter ended. When the fury of passion had reached its

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height, it was quieted by the effusion of ink instead of blood. A debate in Congress, or in town meeting,—a discussion in the newspapers,—were the only broils and battles that were known to our fathers. This was a great improvement on the mode in which such controversies have heretofore and elsewhere been managed. For ourselves, although inclined by temperament and habit to take a favorable view of human nature, and to indulge in rather sanguine prospects of the improvement of society, we see no reason to expect that the principle of evil will ever be wholly extirpated, or will cease to influence in some degree the progress of affairs, whether public or private; and if any scope at all is to be allowed for the action of this principle; if human nature is to remain, here as elsewhere, with all its improvements, at a point somewhat below that of absolute perfection; if varieties of character and situation are to create, as they have always done, differences of opinion among the members of the same communities;—we are unable to conceive, from any examples yet recorded in the annals of the world, how such differences, and the controversies that must of course grow out of them, can possibly assume a milder shape than they have hitherto done with us. Happy will it be for our posterity, if the moderation of the party controversies of the last generation be not as strongly illustrated by contrast in the future history of this country, as it is in the past and present history of almost all others.

In farther illustration of this view of the subject, let us glance for a moment at the personal composition of the parties, and at the character of some of the principal measures of each, which were regarded by the other as most objectionable. We shall see at once, that particular circumstances, in their personal situation, will account satisfactorily for the difference in the courses taken by the prominent men, without supposing in any of them any extraordinary obliquity or perversity, still less any actual corruption, and that many very plausible considerations might have been and were urged at the time on both sides of measures and doctrines, in regard to which the public opinion, whether in approbation or disapprobation, is now pretty nearly settled.

In considering the characters of the prominent party leaders of the period, we may perhaps without impropriety exclude entirely from the number, the names of Washington and John Adams, although they have in general been ranked, in the pop-

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ular language, with the Federalists. They concurred with that party in the first controversy about the Constitution, and were supported by it successively for the Presidentship, but were never completely identified with it after the questions in dispute turned upon the new ground of foreign policy. Mr. Adams in fact came to an open rupture with the leaders of the party on this subject, which probably defeated his re-election, and with it their ascendancy in the country. Washington, in constituting his Cabinet, studiously attempted to reconcile discordant opinions; and his personal tendencies were in accordance with those of the time, and of the Democratic party. But both these great men had been aiming too exclusively all their lives at American objects, to take a very strong interest in a party division, which looked at all beyond the sphere of our own country. The most conspicuous persons in the new parties, as they were organized after the Constitution went into operation, belonged to a younger class, of which JEFFERSON on one side and HAMILTON on the other, may be looked upon as the representatives and leaders.

Jefferson and Hamilton were both men of first-rate talent and the most elevated private character; they were both devoted, heart and soul, to the cause of independence; and by their unwearied and effectual exertions in support of it had given to the country the strongest possible pledges of the sincerity of their patriotism. During the struggle with England, they acted entirely in concert, though in different spheres. After the conclusion of peace, their courses gradually diverged, until they at length came into open opposition; but it is easy, without disparagement to the merit of either, to find, in the circumstances in which they were respectively placed, causes that led them to take different views of the general principles of Government and of the characters of particular measures and men.

Immediately after the close of the war, Mr. Jefferson went to Europe and took his station as the representative of his country at the Court of France, where he resided until about the time when the Constitution of the United States went into operation. This was precisely the period of the opening of the French Revolution. Unsullied as yet by any excesses,—its theories untried by the test of sober reality,—it appeared to intelligent and philanthropic men throughout the world, as the opening of a sort of millennium. For the people of this coun-

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try, who had just been engaged in a successful struggle of the kind then approaching in France,—who saw in the most active leaders of the popular party the very men who had fought their battles and shared their counsels, and were now, as we have remarked above, practising upon their example,—it was impossible not to watch the progress of the action with more than ordinary interest. Such was the natural feeling of every American in regard to this subject. Mr. Jefferson, by his position in France and the part he had taken in our own Revolution, was looked up to by the friends of reform as a sort of oracle. They constantly recurred to him, as an experienced and successful champion of the same cause in which they were engaged, for counsel and direction. The prominent patriots often met at his house. The Declaration of Rights, which preceded the first French Constitution, was drafted, we are told, in concert by him and Lafayette. With a committee so composed, it is easy to imagine from what quarter proceeded the principal suggestions. The first Constitution was proposed after a consultation among the leading patriots, which took place at Mr. Jefferson's residence. In giving his approbation, his sympathy, his concurrence,—as far as he could do it with official propriety,—to the earliest movements of the French Revolution, he found himself sustained by the unanimous consent of all the men, whose opinions could with him be supposed to possess much value. Even the far-reaching vision of Burke had not yet discerned the symptoms of the approaching storm. The 'monster Pitt' was at this time an avowed friend of the contemplated reform in France. A few individuals, including Gouverneur Morris, who was then at Paris, sympathized with the Court in opposing them, but were unable to give any reasons for their opinions, which were likely to satisfy a mind like that of Jefferson. Was it unnatural, then, that under these circumstances the tendency in favor of popular principles of government, which he carried with him to Europe, should have been confirmed and fixed forever as the ruling bias of his mind? Is it necessary to suppose him either imbecile, corrupt, or inconceivably perverse, if under these circumstances he continued to dwell habitually upon the existing abuses of power, rather than the possible abuses of Liberty? Is it just to represent him as feeling, thinking, or acting under French influence, while he was simply pursuing the same tone of feeling, thought, and action as before, and was in fact himself one

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of the principal channels though which the people of this country were then exercising upon France that *American influence*, which, as we have said, was one of the most efficient causes in determining the course of events in Europe?

Let us now look at the position of Hamilton. At the time when Mr. Jefferson went to Europe he was elected a member of the Continental Congress, and continued till the adoption of the Constitution to take the most active concern in the political affairs of the country. He was now for the first time called upon to give his attention to the principles of civil polity, the sphere of his action having been during the war exclusively military. During this period, the situation of the United States was, as we have had occasion to remark, a sort of exception to that of all the rest of the civilized world. It was a time of reaction. While the evils chiefly complained of every where else, (as with us until the accomplishment of independence,) were the abuses of constitutional power, in our case the difficulty now lay in the want of an efficient and properly organized government. While the natural tendency among the intelligent and well-meaning every where else, (as with us before the Revolution,) was in favor of reforming established institutions, correcting abuses, restraining the action of Government and enlarging that of individuals, or in one word, of *Liberty*,—the natural tendency among the same class of persons in the United States at that period, was in favor of strengthening established institutions,—re-enforcing the Government, increasing and extending the influence of the *Law*. The political affairs of the Union were in a state of confusion:—the taxes could not be collected; the treaties with foreign powers were not executed; commerce and manufactures were entirely at a stand for want of proper legal regulation and protection; credit was unknown; in some of the States there were already open insurrections; every thing in short indicated weakness in the main springs of the political machine. The tendency therefore in favor of such reform as would give them more efficiency, was a just and natural one. It resulted, happily for the country, in the adoption of the present Constitution. In the whole movement which terminated in this most salutary measure, Hamilton, as is well known, took a most active part. With an ardor belonging to his age and temperament, he carried his views of the extent of the reforms that were necessary considerably beyond those of most of his fellow labor-

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ers in the work. He proposed his own plans with manly frankness, but when he found that they were not relished, acquiesced with perfect readiness in those that were preferred, and exercised all his talents and influence in procuring their adoption. He is understood however to have believed, that the Constitution would not ultimately prove to be practicable, and that, after giving it a proper trial, it would be found necessary to recur to a stronger system. In this opinion he probably died. But however this may be, it was the obvious effect of the whole course of thought, reasoning, writing, and action in which he was engaged during the period between the peace and the adoption of the Constitution, to divert his attention from the abuses of power and fix it upon the dangers of liberty, to impress in short upon his mind a tendency opposed to the general spirit of the times, and similar to that which was felt by the party in Europe, that sustained the existing Governments against the movement of the French Revolution.

It may be added, that the military career, in which Hamilton had passed the preceding period of his life, was the one of all others best fitted to prepare him to receive such an impression. A free association with the most intelligent and polished classes of society, and a free communication through the medium of books with the minds of the best and wisest men of all other times and countries, will in general be likely to suggest a somewhat favorable view of human nature and a disposition to believe in the possibility of keeping down the evil principle, without the employment of much actual force. On the other hand, a larger intercourse with the world, especially in the form in which it is presented in camps, and an habitual observation of the modes of discipline which are there found necessary, may very probably generate a low estimate of individual character and a belief in the general expediency of the severest systems of civil government. We find accordingly, that such appears to have been the effect of these different courses of training upon the opinions of these two eminent statesmen. Jefferson has been charged with indulging in visionary theories of political improvement, and in general confined his strictures on the state of society to the habits of the privileged orders of Europe. Hamilton thought less favorably of men in general, and is said to have regarded the corrupt means which were formerly employed by the British ministry to maintain their influence in Parliament, as

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indispensable to the practicability even of that form of government.

Prepared in this way, by the influence of the situations in which they had been placed since the close of the war, to take distinct and even opposite views of the tendency of the age, these two eminent men, upon the first organization of the Government, found themselves called upon to occupy the two first places in the administration, and to act together as they best might, under the superior direction of Washington, in the conduct of the public affairs. Equally intelligent, upright and patriotic as they were, they would probably have been able, notwithstanding the differences in their general views, to concur as to most matters of practice in which that difference was not immediately involved; but under the particular circumstances in which the Government and the country were then placed, it was brought more or less into discussion by almost every new measure that was proposed. They agreed in considering the Constitution as on the whole a great improvement, although Jefferson regarded it as too strong, and Hamilton as too weak: but in what spirit was it to be administered? Jefferson, with his views of its general character, would naturally adopt the principle of a strict, and Hamilton of a liberal construction. Hence the difference between them upon the Bank and the Funding System, which embarrassed the first steps of the new administration. While these questions were still in agitation, the French Revolution was rapidly taking such a form as necessarily affected, to a greater or less extent, the policy of all Christendom. France declared war against Austria and her allies: England joined the alliance. What should be the course of the United States? We had positively guarantied the West-Indian Islands to France in the event of war. Jefferson, with his general views of the tendency of the Revolution, was naturally disposed to observe this pledge. Hamilton was anxious, at whatever hazard or sacrifice, to keep clear of any connexion with France. Hence the difference of opinion about the Proclamation of Neutrality. Next came on the questions of Neutral rights and the British treaty;—the war, and then the peace with France,—all of which brought directly into view the points of difference between these two statesmen. It formed in fact the all-absorbing topic of the time, and could not for a moment be kept out of view.

The constant collision in which they were thus placed, of

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course confirmed them both in their respective views, and pretty soon became so unpleasant that they both retired from the cabinet. In the meantime, however, the whole American people were agitated by the same controversies, and the two parties looked respectively to Jefferson and Hamilton as their representatives in the Government, and their principal champions and leaders. Each of them gradually became for one great portion of the people a personification, as it were, of the high political principle,—*Liberty* on the one hand, and *Law* on the other,—which formed the watch-word and symbol of his party. Both, though comparatively very young when they acquired this commanding influence over the opinions and feelings of their countrymen, maintained it undiminished to the close of their lives. Hamilton, though a mere private gentleman, ruled with despotic empire in the hearts of his political friends, till the day of his untimely death. Jefferson, representing the ideas to which the force of circumstances necessarily gave the ascendency, rose rapidly to the first places in the Government, swept down all opposition at his re-election as President, and even after his retirement continued to be the oracle of his party, until the close of the war and the further progress of events in Europe terminated the existence of the controversy, and produced, as we have remarked, upon the questions involved in it, a complete unanimity of opinion.

Jefferson and Hamilton therefore stood forward, in their day and generation, before the American people as the respective personal representatives of the great ideas of *Liberty* and *Law*; —the two essential elements of social order, whose combination in one form or another is indispensable in every constituted society, but which the force of circumstances had at that time brought into hostile conflict. Let us now look at the definition which has lately been given of *Great Men* by one of the most distinguished and enlightened philosophers of the day, without the slightest reference to these individuals, or in any way to the history of our country.

'A Great Man,' says Cousin in his Lectures on the History of Philosophy, 'a Great Man, considered as such, is not a mere individual. It is his peculiar character to represent better than any other person, the ideas, the interests, the events of his age. The other individuals of the same nation who are contemporary with him, will also share these ideas, interests and events, but they have not the same energy. They re-

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present their age and nation, but they represent it in a feeble, faithless and imperfect way. No sooner does the true representative appear, than they all discern distinctly in him what they had felt before obscurely in themselves. They acknowledge the spirit of the times; the spirit that is moving within themselves. They consider the Great Man as their own real image; their *idéal:* it is for this reason that they worship him, that they follow him,—that he becomes their idol and their chief. The Great Man is in fact nothing more than the people personified, and it is precisely on this account that the people sympathize with him; that they put confidence in him, that they are filled with love and enthusiasm for him, that they give themselves up to him. This is the highest degree of devotion, that we can or ought to expect from one man to another. Men cannot and ought not if they could, to feel a higher one. They serve the man who serves them. The origin of the influence of Great Men is therefore something far more deeply seated than that of any mere external consent of their fellow citizens, which would often be a very questionable proof of respect. It is the deep, spontaneous, irrepressible conviction, that this individual is himself *the People,—the Age.*'

Such was unquestionably the source of the influence exercised by these two statesmen, and particularly Mr. Jefferson, (for as in the works before us no exception is taken to the character of Hamilton, there is the less necessity for going particularly into his defence,) over the American mind. If Cousin be right,—as few reflecting men will be disposed to deny,—in considering the persons who are capable of exercising such an influence, as emphatically *Great Men*, we can have no hesitation in referring Mr. Jefferson to that class. In the *talents*, by which individuals are commonly supposed to acquire and extend their influence, he was almost wholly deficient: he had no military taste or skill; he never spoke in public, and had no peculiar power in writing. It is said by the author of the Familiar Letters, that he ruled the American people by 'the magic of his pen.' This idea appears to be erroneous. Mr. Jefferson wrote through life very little. The little he wrote consisted mostly of private letters, which never went out to the people: in his few published writings, there is no extraordinary force or charm of style. As mere literary productions, they would have attracted no attention; they produced effect not as writings, but as *acts*. Indeed, the author of the

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Familiar Letters, after ascribing Mr. Jefferson's influence to the magic of his pen, elsewhere somewhat inconsistently remarks, that a particular state paper, which has never been supposed to possess any extraordinary literary merit, is superior in manner to the Declaration of Independence. Possibly it may be; we have not taken the trouble to compare them; but who ever thought of attributing the effect of the Declaration to the merit of the style? Who that could enter into the spirit of the paper, would dwell with any interest on the language? It was a simple record of the great *Act*, by which thirteen Colonies shook off the British yoke, and sprang into being as independent States. It was only as an *Act* that it drew attention. The total absence of all pretension to literary merit, was the only literary merit which it could possibly possess, and this it has. The case is substantially the same with all the rest of Mr Jefferson's writings. There was no magic in his pen. The witchcraft by which he acquired influence lay, like that of the Maréchale d'Ancre, in his *mental superiority*. The source of his power was the energy, with which he represented in his feelings and opinions and acts the *Spirit of the Age*. It is a common mistake to suppose, that extraordinary skill in some particular accomplishment which depends in a great degree on study or accidental personal qualifications, such as writing, public speaking, or even the technical art of war, will carry with it a great power over the minds of other men. This may sometimes appear to be the case, because skill of this kind is often combined with the moral energy of character which constitutes real greatness. But even in this case, the talent is the mere instrument of the mighty mind, which can work just as well with the talents of others as its own. It was the same thing to Moses, whether he spoke himself or employed his brother Aaron for a mouthpiece. These talents are in the nature of beautiful arts: we admire their possessors as artists; as men, we can only yield our homage to the superior mind: and the only test of general superiority is the mental energy, which renders the language, writings and conduct of its possessor a bolder, firmer, truer expression, than any other to be met with, of the opinions and feelings that prevail at the time in the community.

Such having been the character of Mr. Jefferson, and such the nature of the influence which he exercised over his countrymen, it is not difficult to form an opinion of the correctness of

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the charges which were made upon him during his life-time by his political opponents, and which are now revived in the works before us. According to the author of the Familiar Letters, the objects which Mr. Jefferson had in view were three-fold; 'first, the aggrandisement of France, secondly the destruction of England, and thirdly, the demolition of Federalists as a party, and the *expatriation* of the citizens who were of that party.' This statement, though not without some foundation in fact, obviously gives a very incorrect notion of the merits of the case. Mr. Jefferson's object was *Liberty*. He felt and personified for a large portion of his countrymen, the tendency of the times towards a reform of the abuses of Government, and an extension of the sphere of individual activity. The political and military movements, which originated in this tendency, were in Europe led by France and opposed by England. France was strenuously laboring for the accomplishment of the objects which he considered most desirable, England was strenuously opposing it. Under these circumstances, it was a matter of course that he should wish for the success of France and the failure of England: not that he cared any thing for France or England, as such, but that desiring the end, he naturally desired the means. To Hamilton and his friends, on the other hand, whose object and watchword was *Law;*—who felt and represented for the American people the counteracting tendency of the party in Europe that opposed the movement of the French Revolution,—England for the same reason appeared as an ally, and France as an obstacle. Neither party cared any thing for France or England as such; neither was under foreign influence. Foreign influence takes place when individuals or parties, from corrupt motives, espouse the interests of a foreign nation at the expense of that of their own. To wish or to endeavor to promote the success of a nation, whose interests and objects you suppose at the time to be identical with those of your own, is not a proof of foreign influence, but of patriotism, more or less enlightened, accordingly as the view you take of the subject is more or less correct.

The reciprocal sentiments of our domestic parties towards each other were founded in considerations of a precisely similar character. Mr. Jefferson and his friends regarded the existence and activity of the Federal party as an obstacle to the prevalence in this country of their favorite views. It was a

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matter of course to desire their *failure*, or, as the author of the Letters expresses it, their destruction and demolition as a party. The position and the views of Hamilton and his friends respecting the Republicans were precisely similar. Neither party had any wish to injure the members of the opposite one, as individual citizens. In saying this, we allude of course to intelligent and prominent men, and particularly to Mr. Jefferson, whose intentions are now under consideration. The mere partisans took an entirely different view of the matter, as happens in all other similar cases. Without distinctly understanding the nature of the difference between the parties, those of each side regarded their own creed as a series of palpable truisms, which could not possibly be doubted by any man of common sense and common honesty, and that of the opposite party as a tissue of mere pretences, which those who employed them could not possibly believe themselves. Their own political friends comprehended all the talents and virtue in the community, while their opponents were a combination of unprincipled profligates, whose real object, however disguised, was to build up their own fortunes upon the ruins of the country. But this was, of course, a merely partial and passionate view of the subject, which could not have been taken at the time by reflecting men, and must now be rejected without hesitation, as entirely at variance with the history of the period, and the usual principles of human action.

The object of Mr. Jefferson through life was, therefore, as we have said, to increase and extend the influence of the great principle of *Liberty*, to which he had attached his faith, and which formed as it were his religion. In his first effort, when still a mere youth, he moved, as a representative in the General Assembly of Virginia, the immediate emancipation of all the slaves;—in his bold, vigorous and effectual exertions in the cause of independence;—in his long, sagacious and successful campaigns as the acknowledged leader of the Republican party;—and finally, in the tenor of all his writings, public and private, we see the steady operation of this one predominating motive. It would be difficult to find another political character, of equal distinction, in whose course there is less appearance of any variableness or even shadow of turning; and this, independently of other considerations, which place the matter beyond a doubt, is a strong proof of his entire sincerity. If it were intended to indicate the weak points in

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his character, it would be more natural, instead of imputing to him a *belle passion* for one foreign nation, accompanied by a corresponding hatred for another, and a malignant and inconceivable desire to exterminate a large portion of his own fellow citizens,—suppositions which refute themselves on the mere enunciation,—it would be more natural, we say, instead of making these impossible and unimaginable charges, to represent him as governed by selfish motives; as employing the pretence of a zeal for liberty, to aid him in securing his own personal elevation. There is often some mixture of selfish purpose in the views of those who act in the main upon principle, and a charge of this kind would have at least some appearance of plausibility, which does not belong to the others. But in the case of Mr. Jefferson, the suspicion of interested and selfish motives will be found to be in a very remarkable degree inconsistent with the tenor of his conduct. Indeed, the fact that an individual acts through life under the influence of a high principle, which he embraces and adheres to with a sort of passion, almost excludes the possibility of any considerable mixture of merely selfish purpose. In regard to this point, Mr. Cousin we think does injustice to the character of his Great Men. He supposes them to be themselves unconscious of the influences by which they are moved, and to perform their exploits with a view to some paltry object of a secondary character. But this view of the subject is obviously incorrect. The Great Man is great precisely because he feels in tenfold measure, and has the power of expressing in his actions with tenfold energy, the common impressions of his age. This is Cousin's definition, and to say at the same time that he is a mere unconscious agent, doing he knows not what, under influences which he does not understand, is a plain contradiction in terms.

In the case of Mr. Jefferson, the suspicion of selfish motives is, as we have said, very slightly supported by facts. The youth, who could stand up in an assembly of slave-holding planters, with a proposal for immediate emancipation, the idea of which even now, and in the free States, curdles the blood of every judicious friend of humanity, was no mere calculator, and we may boldly say, could never have become one. In like manner the man who, still in the vigor of life, being scarcely over thirty years of age,—after appearing with so much distinction in the Continental Con-

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gress, after writing the Declaration of Independence, could resign his seat and retire to his paternal acres and state politics, was evidently not under the influence of selfish ambition. The difficulty would rather be to reconcile this and some passages of his after life with the line of conduct prescribed by patriotic feeling and an enlightened sense of duty. After his retirement from Congress he declined the appointment of Minister to France, the most attractive certainly that could then have been offered to a man of his age and character. He preferred a seat in the Virginia Legislature. He is elected Governor of the State, and after reëlection retires from the office. He finally goes out to France as Minister, is transferred from that post to the head of the Cabinet of Washington, from which, after serving through the first Presidential term, he again retires to private life. It may be said, that thus far his moderation was merely affected, as a means of attaining with greater certainty the ultimate objects of his ambition. But if this were so, how can we account for the resolute determination with which, after the close of his second term, he retires forever from political life?

> 'Lowliness is young Ambition's ladder,
> Whereto the climber upward turns his face,
> *But having once attained the topmost round,*
> *He then unto the ladder turns his back,*
> Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
> By which he did ascend.'

Mr. Jefferson, after 'attaining the topmost round,' and when his popularity was such that he might without difficulty have continued to occupy it for the rest of his days, voluntarily resigned it, at an age when the mere lust of power and office is as hot as at any other, and passed twenty years in complete retirement, without, so far as we can judge from his correspondence, casting a single longing, lingering look at the elevation which he had left.

'—— Was this ambition?'

Let us then be just to human nature;—let us consent to admit that there may be such things as principle, patriotism, and public virtue, when we have before us an overwhelming mass of unquestionable facts, which cannot be accounted for in any other way. If we wish that our children should look back

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with tenderness, respect and gratitude to us, let us not blaspheme, with wanton and groundless accusations, the memory of our political fathers,—the founders of our institutions,—the givers under Providence of all the blessings we enjoy. Let us, if it must be so, while engaged in the struggles of active life, rail at each other to our hearts' content, but let us not pour out the furious ebullitions of party spirit upon the sacred ashes of the dead. Why indulge in harsh suspicions of men, whose career was one long, unbroken act of public service, because they occasionally differed on particular questions, when we know that they had themselves, long before their deaths, forgiven and forgotten these differences, and gone down together in kindness to their honored graves? Such were not the feelings with which, a few years ago, we laid them side by side in one sepulchre,—the great twin civil fathers of our Liberty,—lovely in their lives, and in their deaths not divided,—whom Providence, as if to ratify forever the amnesty of all unfriendly feeling, upon which they had agreed themselves many years before, called to their account on the very same day, and that the anniversary of their country's independence. Such were not the feelings with which WEBSTER, KIRKLAND, and a hundred others of the greatest and best men, of all parties and opinions, united on that occasion in unanimous acknowledgment of the equal and unparalleled services and virtue of both; with which the whole people, in the beautiful language of Homer,—'smiled through their tears,' in a kind of mournful rapture at the strange and charming coincidence in the time of their departure. Such *is* not now,—such, we are bold to say,—*never will be* the feeling of the country. The amnesty thus agreed upon,—thus ratified and sanctified,—cannot, must not, will not be broken.

The great value of the public services of Mr. Jefferson is generally acknowledged, but the full extent and variety of them can hardly be appreciated, except by those who have studied with some attention the course of his life: certainly not by those who know him only or principally by the part which he took in the political controversies of his latter days. The labors of one of the least conspicuous portions of his public career, when he acted as a member of the Virginia Legislature after his retirement from Congress, would be enough of themselves to found the reputation,—we had almost said, to fill the life of most other great men. During the two or three

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years of this period, in addition to the ordinary routine of legislative and other political business connected with the general state of the country, in which he was involved, he digested the whole Common Law of England and the Statutes up to the time of James I., so far as they required to be altered for application to this country, into bills ready for the action of the Legislature,—most of which have since been adopted, and now form the basis of the Code of Virginia. This was a great work, considered as a mere monument of industry; but is hardly worth notice under this point of view, in comparison with its importance as a medium for the introduction of new principles of legislation. Among these principles, were the abrogation of the laws of entails and primogeniture;—the establishment of religious freedom;—the complete reform of the criminal code, including the abolition of capital punishment in all cases excepting treason and murder;—the emancipation at a certain age of all the slaves born after the passage of the act;—the division of the counties into wards or towns;—and the introduction of a system of popular education, providing for a school in each town, an academy in each county, and a university for the State. The three first of these improvements were carried into effect: most unfortunately for the interest of Virginia, the three last did not receive the assent of the Legislature. So completely had the mind of Mr. Jefferson distanced that of the mass of his contemporaries in his modes of thinking on political subjects, that in the earlier part of his career he rarely succeeded in obtaining their assent to his plans, excepting when he was present in person to explain them. His fellow laborers, with the best intentions in the world, were not only not equal to him, but were incapable even of comprehending him. Before the bills which provided for these invaluable innovations were taken up, the author had gone abroad: and the three last were either not acted on or were rejected. Had they been adopted, the situation of Virginia would have now been very different from what it is. To repair this omission in regard to Education, was one of the principal employments of Mr. Jefferson after his retirement from office. Such, we repeat, his were more than Herculean labors, during two or three of the least conspicuous years of his life. Those who, in the course of a long and active career, have been fortunate enough to render to the public a service equal in importance to the introduction of any one of these great improvements, will be

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most competent to understand and least disposed to depreciate the claims of this distinguished statesman to the admiration and gratitude of his countrymen.

Let it be remembered, too, that the person by whom all these mighty works were effected,—these responsibilities assumed,—these dangers encountered,—was a gentleman of the first social connexions and of large hereditary fortune,—unaffected of course by any of the accidental motives, which are generally supposed to be the only effectual spurs to extraordinary exertion. On a view of all these circumstances, we do not well see how any judicious observer can feel himself authorized to attribute the course of Mr. Jefferson's political conduct to any other motive than an ardent zeal for liberty,—indiscreet perhaps at times, but always honest, and tending, as he understood it, to the general good.

The agreeable task of defending a distinguished public benefactor, against imputations on his character which we consider unfounded, has led us somewhat farther than we anticipated from the more general view of the subject. Our principal object was to intimate, that the prominent members of both the old parties were equally men of honor, principle, and patriotic feeling, although they took different and even opposite views of the great questions which then agitated the Christian world; and we cited the examples of Jefferson and Hamilton in support of this remark. It would probably be found to be equally correct in its application to the other distinguished politicians of the same period, but we have now no room to push this branch of the inquiry any farther. We had also intended to examine some of the prominent measures which were supported respectively by the two parties, for the purpose of showing, that though each at the time thought very hardly of the other, their opposition may fairly be attributed to the radical difference in their general political principles, to which we have adverted, aud was quite consistent with the supposition of substantial honesty, intelligence, and patriotic feeling in both. The length to which our remarks have already been extended, will prevent us from going into much detail upon this head. We shall however advert very briefly to a few of the more interesting questions, which came up successively in the long course of these debates.

Let us look, for example, at the policy observed by the Government at the opening of the war between England and

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France, particularly the Proclamation of Neutrality and the prohibition of the fitting out of French cruisers in the ports of this country. Although it is understood that these measures were agreed to unanimously in the Cabinet, they were nevertheless warmly opposed by a portion of the citizens, and were considered at the time by their opponents as proofs that the then prevailing party were under British influence. At the present day, the opinion is almost universal that the policy adopted was the true one,—but it is nevertheless certain, that there were arguments of a very urgent character in favor of the other. It is even now doubtful, considering the matter as a strict question of right, whether we were not bound to take part with France in the war, unless that power had voluntarily consented to release us from the obligation.

By the eleventh article of the treaty of alliance of 1778, France guaranties to the United States their independence and their possessions in America, and the United States in turn guaranty to France her possessions in America,—the obligation on both sides being to remain in force from that time forward forever,—*dès-à-présent et pour toujours.* The twelfth article provides that in case of a rupture between France and England, the mutual guarantee shall take effect from the moment the war shall break out. It can hardly be denied, that these stipulations amounted to a permanent alliance, offensive and defensive, between France and the United States in all their future wars with other powers;—and that such an alliance involved, as one of its incidents, a right in each to fit out cruisers against the common enemy in the ports of the other. It was, in fact, admitted by Hamilton and the other advocates of the neutral policy, that such was the proper construction of these stipulations; but it was contended that they could only be supposed to apply to the case of a defensive war, and that the existing war was on the part of France an offensive one. This reasoning, though plausible enough, was far from being clear of an at least equally plausible objection. In the first place, the treaty made no distinction between offensive and defensive wars; the stipulation was to take effect in the case of a rupture,—*dans le cas d'une rupture;*—from the moment that the war shall break out,—*dès le moment qu'une telle guerre viendra à éclater;*—and admitting even that, notwithstanding the generality of these expressions, they are to be understood as limited to the

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case of defensive wars, it is far from being clear that the war in which France was then engaged was not of that description. It is true that the formal declaration was made by that power, but this is by no means the only fact to be taken into view: it is only one, which is to be considered in connexion with a variety of others. The declaration of Independence by our own Congress was virtually a declaration of war, but it will not readily be admitted in this country that the Revolutionary war was, on our part, offensive. In all such cases the real question is, which party committed the outrages upon the other which rendered an appeal to force indispensable, and of course justifiable? In the case of the French Revolutionary war, and of our own, this question would have been decided differently by different persons, according to their respective views of the merits of the case, and was in fact just as doubtful as they were. It was also contended, by those who were disposed to admit that we were bound under the treaty to take part with France, that the changes in the government of that country, and the outrages committed on our commerce by some of the revolutionary authorities, had in fact cancelled the treaty itself; and this view of the subject finally so far prevailed in the public councils, as to produce a formal declaration to that effect by the Government. But, in the earlier periods of the controversy, this consideration will now probably not be thought to have had much weight.

On the whole, it may be regarded as at least a very doubtful question, whether we were not actually bound by the treaty to take part with France in the Revolutionary war, unless we could obtain her consent to our neutrality. Had the Government considered it politic to go into the war, they would probably have done so with very few scruples of conscience. The strong considerations of policy which operated against such a course, and the general inclination of the party, which had then the preponderating influence in the Government, to take an unfavorable view of the French Revolution, had doubtless very great influence in deciding the question in favor of neutrality. It is now, we suppose, very generally admitted that the decision was a fortunate one. War is in all cases so tremendous an evil, that it would rarely if ever be resorted to, did not the impulse of mere feeling come in aid of the dictates of cool calculation; and there is hardly a conceivable case, not absolutely involving the existence or honor

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of a nation, in which a cool observer, fifty years afterwards, would regret that it was avoided. But it is due to the character of a considerable portion of the patriotic and intelligent men of the last generation,—including probably Mr. Madison,—to admit that the arguments in opposition to the course pursued by the Government in regard to France, at the opening of the Revolution, were not only exceedingly plausible, but had much foundation in actual truth and right, and that the question was settled on a variety of considerations, among which that of mere expediency had a very important place.

The case is nearly the same in regard to the course pursued towards England, which met with an opposition even more violent and general, than the Proclamation of Neutrality and the other measures operating immediately on France. Even in Boston, as we are told by the author of the Familiar Letters, there was only one man of any note who ventured to express in public his approbation of Jay's Treaty. The Cabinet were divided upon the propriety of ratifying it. Washington himself entertained great doubts upon the subject; and it was with infinite difficulty that the House of Representatives, even after it had been ratified, could be brought to vote the appropriations necessary for carrying it into effect. It was certain at the time, that if the treaty were rejected, the consequence,—under the feeling that prevailed on both sides,—would have been an immediate war with Great Britain. This consideration probably had very great weight in determining the course that was pursued, and must have still more in justifying it in the view of the present generation. But if,—for the reason just now stated of the great preponderance of the argument in favor of peace, in almost every imaginable case where the influence of feeling is entirely removed,—we admit that the policy pursued was right, it must also be admitted that the objections to the treaty were not only plausible but were really of the most serious character.

The most pressing point in the whole negotiation was the trade in provisions. Great Britain, at the opening of the war, had not only revived the so-called rule of 1756, by virtue of which she undertook to restrain the neutral to the same extent of trade in war which he was allowed to carry on in peace,—a pretence obviously without a color of authority, either in natural justice or the practice of civilized nations:—but she declared provisions an article contraband of war, and claimed and exer-

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cised the right of seizing all neutral vessels loaded with them and bound to an enemy's port. As provisions were then the only considerable article of export from the United States, this pretension,—now for the first time advanced or even heard of,—amounted to a claim to interdict our whole trade with the enemies of England,—that is,—as the case then stood,—with almost all the rest of the world. It excited, of course, an unanimous burst of indignation throughout the whole country, and especially, as might have been expected, in the commercial cities. In addition to this, Great Britain put forward at that time,—as she has done ever since, and in theory still does,—the equally modest claim of a right not only to search our merchant vessels on the high seas,—a thing in principle wholly inadmissible, though in some degree authorized by the practice of other nations,—but to muster their crews, and to take by force, and compel, without trial or any means of self-defence, except the slow process of negotiation between the Governments, into her naval service any person whom the subaltern officer employed in the search might choose to pronounce a British subject;—the burden of proof that he is not such being thrown upon the American. These were the only difficult points that Mr. Jay had to settle; the others were in a great measure formal.

What then was the amount of the arrangement which he brought home with him? Not a syllable on the subject of impressment, which, with the augmented power of the nation and the consequently increased sensibility to any outrage on the national honor, would probably now be considered as the more important of the two questions:—not a syllable, we repeat, on the subject of impressment; and as to the trade in provisions, a sort of compromise, by which Great Britain was allowed to seize and carry into port vessels loaded with provisions, as contraband of war, but was bound, through the captors, or in their default, as a Government, 'to *indemnify* the owners for their loss, by paying to them the full value of all articles, with a reasonable mercantile profit thereon, together with the freight, and also the damage incident to such detention,' it being understood that the seizures already made should be considered as included in this arrangement. This compromise, which, looking at it coolly at the present day, seems more like a piece of solemn mockery than a serious stipulation between mutually independent governments,

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was the substantial article of Mr. Jay's treaty, and the one which involved its whole merits, as they were then understood by all parties,—the impressment question not having yet, as we have said, assumed its paramount importance. Is it to be wondered at,—especially when we take into view the very general disposition of the people to look with an eye of favor on the cause of France and with aversion on that of Great Britain,—is it to be wondered at, we say, that under such circumstances a large proportion of the citizens should, in the language of Marshall, 'have rushed impetuously to its condemnation?' Is it absolutely necessary to impute to this large majority,—including, with a single exception, the whole population of Boston, which took the lead in opposition to the treaty,—either corruption, French influence, or some strange perversity and obliquity of intellect, which incapacitated them from seeing the true merits of a perfectly plain case? We apprehend not. On the contrary, we doubt very much whether the treaty as ratified could ever have been carried into effect; whether the people would have submitted to the exercise by England of the right of seizing provision vessels, which was conceded by it. The ratification was accompanied by a strong memorial against the exercise of this right, which Great Britain, in consideration probably of the generally friendly disposition then manifested towards her by our Government, and the doubtful relation, bordering very nearly on actual hostility, which existed between us and France, was content for the time to waive, and which has never been renewed in precisely the same shape.

Passing over a long series of intermediate events, which our limits will not permit us to notice, let us come at once to the war, the measure for which the Republican party were at the time, and are still by those who retain the partisan feelings of the time, most severely censured. It is difficult, as we have already remarked in reference to the two measures we have been considering, for a mere observer,—looking coolly at events twenty years after their occurrence,—not to regret, in almost every supposable case, that recourse was had to war for the adjustment of a controversy between two governments. But so far as the merits of the questions in dispute in this instance are concerned, it would be equally difficult to deny that the right was wholly on our side; nor can it be concealed, that attempts to settle them by negotiation had been made and

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renewed so often, that they could not consistently with self-respect be continued any longer, and that the time had come when it was necessary either to acquiesce silently under intolerable outrages, or to repel them by force.

Upon the renewal of the war in Europe, after the truce of Amiens, the British Government not only undertook, as before, to interdict all neutral trade which was not permitted in time of peace,—to search neutral vessels on the high seas for contraband of war, and enemies' property,—and to take from them by violence all persons, who could not prove themselves to the satisfaction of the searching officer not to be British subjects,—but reviving in a still more sweeping and oppressive form, their pretension to intercept the neutral trade with their enemies in provisions, they now extended the interdiction to the trade in all other articles. They declared the whole coast of the Continent of Europe in a state of blockade, and by a sort of political *Rule of False*, they deduced from this avowedly *constructive*, that is, factitious and imaginary blockade, the substantial and very important right of prohibiting the people of the United States from trading with any other nation except Great Britain. Was it, then, or was it not possible for the people of the United States to acquiesce in or submit to this pretension? The author of the Familiar Letters declines to enter into any examination of this question, remarking that the subject is a dry one, and may as well be passed over. It is true, that many very dull books and pamphlets have been written upon the subject of neutral rights, but as the case stood at that time between Great Britain and the United States, the point in question was in substance the one we have stated:—is it, or is it not possible for the people of the United States to allow Great Britain to interdict their trade with all the ports of Europe, excepting her own? With a perfectly cool and tranquil state of public feeling, the controversy might probably have been settled by amicable methods; but with passions wrought up on both sides to a high degree of excitement in regard to the more general questions involved in the subject, and on ours constantly inflamed by the recurrence of fresh outrages committed on the persons and property of our citizens, not only on the high seas, but within our own waters, and in sight of our own shores, it had become apparent, long before negotiation was abandoned, that it must be unsuccessful, and that the only alternative was

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submission, or forcible resistance. Was the Government right in adopting the latter? Or rather, without undertaking to decide this question, is it absolutely necessary to impute to the Government for so doing, and to the party that supported them, either corruption, French influence, or some extraordinary perversity and obliquity of intellect? We think not.

The opponents of the war often inquired at the time, and the author of the Familiar Letters renews the question: Why select Great Britain as the enemy? France had injured us as well as her great antagonist. If we must go to war, why not at least go to war with the great foe of social order and good government, rather than a power, who may fairly be regarded as their great champion throughout the civilized world? This was a natural thought with the Federal party, but could not of course be assented to by the opposite one, forming an immense majority of the American people, who took then, as they now do, a directly opposite view of the questions agitated in Europe, believing the French Revolution, under all its successive phases, to be substantially a political Reformation, and the counter-revolution a mere effort to sustain existing abuses. This, as we have said, is now the opinion of the whole American people, and of the British Government itself. If the American Government had intended to go to war upon the general questions involved in the great European struggle, the war would still have been with England and not with France. It was however admitted, that as to this great struggle neutrality was our true policy, although the views entertained upon its merits in some degree colored the sentiments of both our domestic parties as to the questions in which our own rights as a neutral power, were involved. Still the practical inquiry was, shall we, on account of these questions, declare war against England or France? Now in regard to all these questions, France was in principle with us. She had professed for centuries our own doctrines on the subject of neutral rights, and there was no reason to doubt the sincerity of her professions, because they were in accordance with her interest as an inferior maritime power. She had retaliated the pretended blockade of England with a similar pretended blockade of the British Islands, and an exclusion of British produce from all the countries under her influence. The principle of retaliation, as implied in this measure, was of course entirely inadmissible, but as France had no power to

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carry it into effect, it was a mere menace. If then our controversies with the two powers had reached a point when war had become inevitable, would it have been natural to *select* as our enemy the nation which agreed with us entirely, and was ready to make common cause with us on the subject of our rights as a neutral power, because she had adopted, for the purpose of showing her dissatisfaction at our supposed remissness in asserting these rights, a measure in itself entirely indefensible, but which, being also entirely inoperative, could hardly be regarded as a sufficient course of war,—rather than the one, which asserted in principle, and was able to and actually did carry into effect in practice, the pretensions of which we complained? Or, without undertaking as before to discuss this question, is it absolutely necessary to suppose that the Government, in declaring war under these circumstances against England rather than France, was acting under corrupt French influence or some strange and inconceivable perversity of mind, equivalent in its effect to virtual insanity?

This question too will be answered, we think, by the verdict of impartial posterity in the negative. It has been, if we are not mistaken, already decided in that manner by the present generation, which holds the place of posterity in reference to the original parties to this controversy. While we may perhaps regret that the war, at whatever sacrifice of feeling, had not been delayed a short time longer, when the course of events in Europe would have rendered it unnecessary, we attribute to the statesmen who declared and the party who supported it, no other than honorable and patriotic motives. We believe that on the points in controversy they were entirely in the right; and that, in the long negotiations that preceded the war, as well as in those which brought it to a close,—they exhibited throughout, as well in point of learning, logic, and even mere literary accomplishments, as in the high and generous tone of feeling which prevailed in their writings, a decided, and what we may well consider under all the circumstances, as it was pronounced to be by one of the ablest of the British statesmen in open Parliament, 'an astonishing superiority,' intellectual and moral, over the British politicians with whom they were matched. When we recollect that these included such men as Castlereagh and Canning, this was no mean praise. Indeed we venture to affirm, without the fear of being contradicted by any one who has had occasion to ex-

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amine the records of modern diplomacy, that there is no case to be found in them of an international controversy that has been argued with equal ability. From the commencement of these negotiations, in the celebrated letters of Mr. Jefferson, down to their fortunate termination in those of the Commissioners at Ghent, they exhibit in every part a thorough investigation of the points in dispute,—an extent of general historical learning,—a large, correct and liberal conception of natural and national law,—a power, skill, and taste in the use of materials, and a coolness, good temper, and courtesy in the mode of treating opponents, in the highest degree creditable to the persons employed, as well as to the administrations that appointed, and the country that produced them. It is impossible, we think, to peruse these finished productions in connexion with the tissue of meagre information, sophistical reasoning, impertinent assumption, and often paltry sarcasm, which was in general opposed to them by the negotiators on the other side, without being satisfied, on the most irresistible internal evidence, of the substantial justice of the American claims, and of the conscious integrity and purity of purpose with which they were maintained by the Government.

But while the present generation renders this justice to the Republican administrations, which declared and prosecuted the war, they are also disposed to admit, with equal cheerfulness, the purity and patriotism of the motives which influenced the opposition to it. Firmly believing, as they did, that Great Britain was fighting the battles of the civilized world, ourselves included,—that she was the great champion of social order and the bulwark of our religion,—they were not disposed to quarrel with her about minor points, either of doctrine or practice; and we ought not to consider it surprising, that, under these circumstances, they should have sustained, with extraordinary tenacity, pretensions on her part which now appear entirely and obviously untenable. In their practical proceedings, they sometimes went a little beyond the limit of legal and constitutional right. Their doctrine in regard to the authority of the General Government over the militia, has not been confirmed by the Supreme Court. Although there was nothing illegal or unconstitutional in the actual proceedings of the Hartford Convention, it was certainly a measure of dangerous tendency. What its ultimate results might have been, had the war been continued, can now be matter of conjecture only, and it would

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be injurious to hazard, on the strength of mere conjecture, unfavorable judgments of the character of individuals of acknowledged patriotism. It may be remarked, however, that whatever may have been in other respects the character and tendency of the Hartford Convention, it was in both particulars decidedly *Anti-federal.* Its intended effect, as well upon the administration of the Government as upon the Government itself, through the amendments of the Constitution recommended by it, was to restrain and diminish the authority of the Union and increase that of the States. It illustrates therefore very curiously the facility with which, as we have already remarked, a Federal party in this country, when it is placed by circumstances in opposition to the General Government, gradually assumes an Anti-federal character; as many of the proceedings of the Republican administrations shew how readily an Anti-federal party, on coming into power, adopts a large and liberal construction of the constitutional authority of the General Government.

Hence, too, we see why, notwithstanding the inflamed state of opinion and the really critical position of the country, the Hartford Convention was not unanimously approved at the time, by the Opposition party. This party was composed, to a considerable extent, especially in its prominent members, of Federalists, and it was quite natural that they should enter with great reluctance, on any grounds of temporary expediency, however urgent, into a measure directly contrary in its tendency to all their favorite principles of government. We find accordingly, that out of New England the Convention found but little acceptance even with the Opposition, and that it was publicly disapproved by the Pennsylvania Legislature, where the Federal party then had the majority. Of the then five New England States, three only concurred in this proceeding. Hence too, we see why, even in Massachusetts, some of the prominent Federalists, including such men as John Adams, John Quincy Adams, and Samuel Dexter, publicly opposed this and some other measures of the Opposition. The author of the Familiar Letters remarks, in reference to the last of these gentlemen, that 'during Mr. Madison's war, he separated from the Federal party, and that it is not known that the true causes of this separation have ever been assigned.' We presume that there has never been much doubt upon this point in the minds of

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reflecting and impartial men. Mr. Dexter had been, through life, a decided Federalist; and though he disapproved the embargo, the war, and the general course of the Republican administrations, he probably retained so strong an attachment to his Federal principles, that he did not like to sacrifice them to the considerations of policy, which were considered as of paramount importance by some of his friends. He was freely charged, at the time, with deserting his party,—the highest of all offences in the opinion of mere partisans:—but it is now apparent that it was he who continued to act upon the *principles* of the party, the body of which, in the States that were concerned in the Convention, had been led by circumstances to assume an *Anti-federal* position; and to adopt opinions upon Government in general, and upon the character and construction of the Federal Constitution, directly opposed to the whole tenor of their former professions and practice. If we give full credit, as we are disposed to do, for intelligence and honesty of purpose, to that portion of the Federal party who were induced by the strong pressure of merely political motives to change or waive their general principles, it would surely be the height of injustice to refuse it to others, who only differed from them in retaining with more firmness, or acting with more consistency, upon the old common creed.

We believe, therefore, that we express the prevailing sentiment of the men of the present generation, when we recognise in the controversies of the last, only such differences as may fairly and naturally exist among honest, intelligent, and high-minded citizens; when we recognise as belonging to that class the prominent individuals of the two principal shades of opinion,—the Jeffersons, Madisons, Pinkneys, Clays, and Wirts on the one hand; and the Hamiltons, Parsonses, Ameses, Cabots, and Otises, on the other. It was one of those cases that so often occur, when the best and wisest men in the community, among whom all these must undoubtedly be ranked, happen, from varieties of temperament or accidental position, to take opposite views of the great political questions which engage for the time the public attention. In the heat of controversy they, or more commonly their friends and partisans, are naturally led to suspect and accuse each other of insincerity;—but as passion subsides, they gradually learn to respect each other; and posterity, at any rate, does full justice to them all.

These controversies, like most others of much extent and

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duration, were terminated, not by a victory of either party over the other, nor yet by any direct amicable compromise, but by changes in the situation of the country and the world. The close of the war in Europe reduced the disputes about neutral rights, for the time, to mere questions of theory, and rendered the conclusion of a treaty with England a matter of course. The general satisfaction that was felt throughout the country at the restoration of peace, poured at once a flood of oil over the tempestuous surges of party warfare, and brought in what was denominated at the time the 'era of good feelings.' At no period in the history of the country has it been so free from internal dissensions on political subjects, as during the administration of President Monroe. In the mean time, the progress of events in Europe was such, as to render it from year to year less and less probable that a party division could ever grow up again in this country, corresponding with that which had just subsided; and this may now be regarded as in the nature of things impossible. The controversy between the great divisions of the Christian Commonwealth, which rally respectively under the banners of *Liberty* and *Law*, is still kept up, but with such an arrangement of parties as renders it altogether improbable,—to say the least,—that it can ever become a matter of much interest in the United States. The great point of difference between this new arrangement and the former one is, that Great Britain is now upon the side of Liberty. The first indication of the approach of this change in her position, was her refusal to accede to the treaty commonly called the Holy Alliance, in 1813. The next was her neutrality in regard to the several military revolutions that successively occurred on the Continent of Europe, in 1820 and afterwards,—particularly that of Spain. The recognition of the independence of the Spanish Colonies in South America, in opposition to the wish of Spain and the great Continental Alliance, was the third; and now the question has been finally settled by the triumph of the liberal party in the domestic policy of Great Britain, and the consequent reform of Parliament.

With this change of policy in England, disappears entirely the probability, we may say the possibility, that this country can ever again be agitated by the quarrels of Europe. While Great Britain stood at the head of the great *legitimate* alliance,—while its doctrines prevailed at Court, and with the majorities in Parliament, and gave, to a very considerable

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extent, the tone to public opinion and the press, it was natural that a strong impression in their favor should be made upon the public opinion of this country. All this is now changed. The spirit of legitimacy has retired from the Court, the Parliament, and the press, or appears there in a feeble and crest-fallen condition, like a deposed sovereign, who having lost his power at home, has ceased of course to command respect or exercise influence abroad;—and it is obvious that the former state of things can never be revived. If the doctrine of *legitimacy*, as understood by the great Continental Allies, be destined ultimately to triumph over that of Liberty, Great Britain may possibly come again under its influence; but it can only be as a conquered province. In the mean time, and while the contest endures, she must necessarily retain the place which she has now taken in the fore-front of the hosts of Liberty, and exercise over all other countries, and particularly this, an influence corresponding with that position. Thus the only channel through which the doctrine of legitimacy could be brought home in a powerful and persuasive shape to the feelings of the American people, as connected with the politics of Europe, is closed forever. We find accordingly,—as we have already had occasion to remark,—that since the changes alluded to in England, there has been no expression of opinion in this country in favor of that doctrine, as understood and acted upon on the Continent. The parties, into which our fathers were divided on the great argument of Liberty and Law, can therefore, never be revived. The same question may perhaps present itself hereafter under new shapes, and in direct application to the circumstances of our own country,—but as it came up before, connected with the policy of Europe and the rival interests of France and England, it is now disposed of beyond the possibility of any future rehearing or appeal. Whatever troubles may be in store for us, that root of bitterness at least is extirpated forever. If the sons must be divided into parties, as the fathers were before them, they will have the satisfaction, such as it is, of contending with each other upon interests exclusively American. Happy will it be for the country,—as we have already remarked,—if their future controversies shall be carried on with equal moderation and terminated with as little injury to the public welfare as those which preceded them.

The 'era of good feelings,' which followed the close of the

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war, and lasted through the greater part of the administration of Mr. Monroe, was brought to a close by the contest for the succession to the Presidency. This was, however, a mere matter of personal competition, involving no question more general than the comparative qualifications of the several candidates; and the same has been the case with the subsequent divisions of parties up to the present day, excepting so far as they have been modified from time to time by the state of public opinion in regard to particular measures. An attempt was made to revive the old controversy, on the occasion of the contest for the succession to Mr. Monroe; but the result proved that the materials were deficient. Should the same attempt be renewed, as it probably may be, it must always be with the same result. In the episode of Nullification, the original controversy between the Federal and Anti-federal principles came again into view; and on that occasion the party now in power,—which had assumed, as a popular title, that of the Democratic party,—professed the old Federal doctrines in a more exaggerated shape than any in which they had ever appeared before. This controversy upon the respective powers and pretensions of the Union and of the States under the Constitution, is, as we have said, the one which we consider most natural to our form of Government, and as consequently likely to recur from time to time while the Government endures, and to enter more or less into all our differences upon all other subjects. Upon the question of Liberty and Law, as argued in Europe,—that is,—upon the relative powers and rights of individuals and the whole body politic,—we all are or profess to be agreed. No change in this respect will probably be attempted or desired by any portion of the people considerable enough to form a party, unless future events, which cannot now be anticipated, shall make great changes in the state of the country. Now and then, a political *Working Man*, (who is commonly in his individual capacity very much at leisure,) proposes the abolition of Property,—or a warm partisan, in the first agony of disappointment at the defeat of a favorite measure or candidate, declares that rather than be so governed he would prefer the British Constitution, 'monarchy and all;' but in ordinary times, the whole people are pretty well satisfied with things as they are. In regard to the relative rights and powers of the Union and the States, the case is different. On that subject there always have been, are, and always will be

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differences of sentiment among the prominent politicians and the different States and sections of the country. All admire the Constitution, but each asserts the privilege of construing it in his own way: and, in the text of the instrument, the debates in the General and State Conventions at the time of its adoption, and the contemporaneous history of the country, the political metaphysician will always find ample materials for an ingenious argument on either side of the question, (looking of course at that side only,) in connexion with almost any particular subject. This controversy will form, we imagine, (as far as general principles are concerned) the staple of most of our future disputes. The administration will generally be formed by the prevalence of personal parties, combined in support of particular individuals; and, under whatever pretences they may push their respective claims before the public, it will commonly be found hereafter, as it has been heretofore, that the party in office will be a Federal, and the party out of office an Anti-federal one.

What influence the progress of events may have upon this controversy,—that is, whether the general tendency of the government be towards a consolidation or a separation of the States, can only at present be matter of conjecture. While the constantly increasing relations between the States are yearly and daily strengthening the formal bands of Union,—the rapid progress of population and wealth is augmenting on the other hand, in a corresponding proportion, the importance of the individual States. Thus the two conflicting elements in our political constitution are regularly strengthened, in almost equal degrees, by the general causes that operate on both; and the conclusion would of course be, that the tendency (for the present at least) is in favor of the continuance of the existing system. For ourselves, we have no wish to see the balance adjusted in any other way. We believe that if the States were absorbed more deeply into the Union than they now are, a Republican General Government would be impracticable. Even now the elective Chief Magistracy is found in practice almost too dazzling a prize to be entrusted to the chances of a popular election, consistently with the public tranquillity. Such an alteration of the Constitution as should diminish the power, patronage and influence of the President, would probably be the most salutary one that could be made. Any great increase in the attributions of the Exec-

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utive or Legislative departments of the General Government, —supposing them to remain elective,—would be the certain prelude to civil commotion. On the other hand, however, any sensible diminution of the powers of the General Government, as defined by the Constitution and as generally understood, would bring us back at once to the anarchy of the Old Confederation. Such would undoubtedly be the effect of the South Carolina doctrine, that each State has a negative on the acts of the General Government, should it ever be recognised as the true theory of the Constitution; and it is therefore an event of good omen that this heresy met with so little favor even with the professed advocates of State Rights. As it can hardly be sustained on any future occasion with greater talent, zeal, and weight of character than it was on this, we may perhaps conclude that it has received its final *quietus*. The other controversies that have been and still are carried on about the construction of the Constitution, though by no means of trivial consequence, are yet unimportant in comparison with this, and may be decided in either way without any serious detriment to the permanent interests of the country.

Note. The note on page 222 was accidentally misplaced. It should have been printed at the bottom of page 216.

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